

*Judit Takács – László Mocsonaki – Tamás P.Tóth*

**Social Exclusion of Lesbian, Gay,  
Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) People in  
Hungary**

**RESEARCH REPORT**



**2008**

**Institute of Sociology Hungarian  
Academy of Sciences**

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and the Labrisz Lesbian Association Budapest**



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## I. INTRODUCTION

LGBT is an umbrella term covering a very heterogeneous group of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people who often appear with joint political efforts in the local and international political arena for efficiency: in order to get a better social representation and more political support. While there can be significant differences between the individuals who are politically represented under the LGBT heading, their main uniting force derives from their social minority group membership. LGBT people are members of relatively powerless social groups, similarly to a significant proportion of Roma people in Hungary, but they differ from “traditional” minorities in two main aspects: they are usually not marked by their bodies, thus they are not recognisable at first sight; and their existence is still perceived in a lot of places as “challenging the natural order of things” (Gross 1991).

### I.1. LGBT people as social minority group members

LGBT people can be seen as members of minority groups, i.e. social groups characterized by a relative powerlessness regarding their interest representing abilities. One of the main disadvantages of using the minority concept is that it does not only imply the acknowledgement of the relative powerlessness of the social groups in question but it also has to operate with fixed – identity – categories, as if anyone could come up with “the correct” or “universal” definition of being gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender.

On the other hand minority can be seen as a useful – political – concept in a society where non-conventional sexual interests or gender expression have discriminative consequences. In places where heteronormativity<sup>1</sup> is losing its social organising power, non-conventional sexual habits, interests, orientation based identities are not forced to develop, or are at least not likely to develop into *threatened identities*. In the case of developing threatened identities the distinc-

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<sup>1</sup> Reference to cultural and social practices that coerce men and women into believing and behaving as if heterosexuality were the only conceivable sexuality. It also implies the positioning of heterosexuality as the only way of being “normal” and as the key source of social reward (Flowers – Buston 2001).

tiveness and the continuity of one's identity, one's self-esteem or, in some cases, one's desire for autonomy can be threatened (Breakwell 1986). From previous Hungarian research findings it turns out that the social category of homosexuality gains its identity constructing capacity mainly from the negative contents of the social representation of homosexuality, which negative contents appear as identity threats (Takács 2004). In this context homosexual identity seems to be much more a social fiction produced by social discrimination than one of the main supporting pillars of individual self-identity.

In the case of gender expression non-conformity, gaining social acceptance for a revised identity can be highly problematic. Transgender and transsexual people can suffer from the lack of continuity in their identity, a lack of self-esteem closely related to the lack of their social acceptance as well as from their overemphasised and unwanted distinctiveness. In places where normative gender role concepts and gender identities are losing their social organising power, non-conventional gender expression won't necessarily lead to the development of threatened identities.

LGBT people as members of a social minority group can suffer from various forms of socio-economic and cultural injustice, but their political claims can rather be identified as claims for *recognition* aimed at remedying cultural injustice than some sort of political-economic restructuring referred to as *redistribution* aiming at redressing economic injustice:

Gays and lesbians suffer from heterosexism: the authoritative construction of norms that privilege heterosexuality. Along with these goes homophobia: the cultural devaluation of homosexuality. Their sexuality thus disparaged, homosexuals are subject to shaming, harassment, discrimination, and violence, while being denied legal rights and equal protections – all fundamentally denials of recognition. To be sure, gays and lesbian also suffer serious economic injustices; they can be summarily dismissed from paid work and are denied family-based social-welfare benefits. But far from being rooted directly in the economic structure, these derive instead from an unjust cultural-valuational structure. (Fraser 1997:18)

The lack of social recognition has an effect on the capacity of LGBT people to fully access and enjoy their rights as citizens. Discriminating practices in the legal system and the social institutions can reflect the notion that only “normal” or “good citizens” should be entitled to full rights of citizenship and as the “good citizen” tends to be hetero-

sexual, it seems that “heterosexuality is a necessary if not sufficient basis for full citizenship” (Phelan 2001 – cited by Richardson 2004). In the context LGBT people can appear as “normal, good citizens” – deserving respect and integration because of their conformity to dominant social norms – only if they fulfil expectations such as being “gender conventional, link sex to love and a marriage-like relationship, defend family values, personify economic individualism, and display national pride” (Seidman 2002). During the 1990s various concepts of citizenship – such as feminist citizenship (Walby 1994), sexual citizenship (Evans 1993), intimate citizenship (Giddens 1992; Plummer 1995) – were introduced that emphasised the necessity to broaden the scope of modern citizenship to consider full participation opportunities of social groups, including LGBT people, being formerly deprived of full community membership.

The sexual minority concept became a part of the Hungarian social and political discourse only recently. According to Csaba Tabajdi, rapporteur of the Council of Europe on the *Situation of lesbians and gays in Council of Europe member states*<sup>2</sup> leading to the EC Recommendation 1474 in 2000<sup>3</sup> as a result of the struggle of human rights and gay rights organisations in Hungary the scope of the political minority concept has been gradually extended to include not only ethnic and national minority groups, who were considered to be the only “true” minorities at the time of the systemic change, but also women, religious minorities, disabled people and since the beginning the 1990s sexual minorities, e.g. lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgender people, too.

The expectations of the international legal environment especially those of the European Union played an important role in the re-examination of the discriminative legal treatment of same-sex relationships in Hungary. In 1998 the European Parliament issued a special declaration emphasizing that it would not support the membership of those applicant countries, whose legislation or po-

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<sup>2</sup> Situation of lesbians and gays in Council of Europe member states, Doc. 8755, 6 June 2000. Report, Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, Rapporteur: Mr Csaba Tabajdi, Hungary, Socialist Group – <http://assembly.coe.int/Documents/WorkingDocs/doc00/edoc8755.htm>

<sup>3</sup> Recommendation 1474 (2000) “Situation of lesbians and gays in Council of Europe member states” – <http://assembly.coe.int/Documents/AdoptedText/TA00/EREC1474.htm>

litical state does not acknowledge the human rights of homosexual people. The main criterion of acknowledging the human rights of homosexual people was the elimination of discriminative parts of the national Penal Codes treating homosexual and heterosexual relationships unequally, especially concerning age of consent issues. In Hungary homosexual practices between consenting adults became decriminalized already in 1961, but between 1961 and 1978 the age of consent was 20, between 1978 and 2002, it was 18 for same-sex partners whereas it was 14 for different-sex partners. The equal age of consent criterion was fulfilled by Hungary only in 2002 following the ruling of the Constitutional Court eliminating the previously existing discriminative aspects of the Hungarian Penal Code relating to different age of consent definitions concerning same sex and different sex sexual practices.

The first general anti-discrimination draft bill that – in harmony with the 2000/78 Employment Equality Council Directive – included the prohibition of discrimination based on sexual orientation was submitted in April 2001. The CXXV/2003 Hungarian law on equal treatment and promotion of equal opportunities, being in operation since January 2004, explicitly names 20 protected categories including sexual orientation and gender identity.<sup>4</sup> However, it can still remain problematic to decide whether sexual orientation based discrimination refers to discrimination based on individuals' same-sex sexual activity, or it also covers discrimination against same-sex couples. According to the proposal of the Equal Treatment Authority, an administrative body established by the equal treatment law, on opening up marriage for LGBT people, sexual orientation and gender identity can be seen as protected categories not only at the level of the individual, but also at the level of couples.<sup>5</sup>

While in Europe by the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century decriminalisation of same-sex sexual activity of consenting adults has been becoming a legal norm cultivated by the European Union as well as the

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<sup>4</sup> The protected categories include race, skin colour, ethnicity, language, disability, state of health, religion, political or other views, sex, **sexual orientation**, age, social origin, circumstances of wealth and birth, and other situations, **gender identity**, family status, motherhood, pregnancy and fatherhood, part-time or limited period employment status, membership of interest representing bodies.

<sup>5</sup> The text of the EBHTT/10.007/10/2007 proposal can be found here: [http://www.egyenlobanasmod.hu/index.php?g=hirek/TTaf\\_070927jj.htm](http://www.egyenlobanasmod.hu/index.php?g=hirek/TTaf_070927jj.htm) (2007-10-23)

Council of Europe, there are still some problem areas in the field of legal emancipation of LGBT people including the legal treatment of LGBT couples and parenting rights.

Present day European social practices reflect a growing awareness concerning the problems of defining marriage exclusively as a heterosexual procreative unit. Today the legal institution of same-sex marriage exists in four European countries (the Netherlands 2001, Belgium 2003, Spain 2004, Norway 2008) and there is a growing number of countries where registered partnership is a legal option for same-sex couples.<sup>6</sup>

Another problem area is parenting rights. Parenting is an especially heated issue because of the widespread assumption that children of a non-heterosexual or transsexual parent or same-sex parents can become especially vulnerable to social prejudice directed primarily at the parent(s). However, it is often forgotten that if “social prejudice were grounds for restricting rights to parents, a limited pool of adults would qualify” (Stacey – Biblarz 2001:178). There is little empirical evidence about advantages and disadvantages of children growing up with LGBT parents but it is important to note that “social science research provides no grounds for taking sexual orientation into account in the political distribution of family rights and responsibilities” (Stacey – Biblarz 2001:179).

Today in Hungary by applying the social minority concept to gay, lesbian, transgender people and/or others characterised by sexual and/or gender non-conformity certain equal treatment opportunities and anti-discriminative guarantees can be gained. Thus the use of the minority concept can reflect a practical political strategy towards gaining equal rights and – at least temporary – shelter from discrimination especially in a society that can be characterised by pronounced inequalities, where non-conventional sexual interests

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<sup>6</sup> Outside Europe same-sex marriage exists in Canada since 2005, in South Africa and the state of Massachusetts of the U.S.A. since 2006. Registered partnership was first introduced in Denmark in 1989, followed by Norway in 1993, Sweden 1994, Iceland in 1996, the Netherlands in 1998, France in 1999 (PACS), Belgium in 2000, Germany in 2001, Finland in 2002, Switzerland in 2004, Andorra, Slovenia, UK in 2005, Czech Republic in 2006, Hungary in 2007 (but in Hungary the legal institution of registered partnership will come into operation only from January 2009). Same-sex registered partnership laws exist also in two states of the US: Connecticut and Vermont.

or gender expression have discriminative consequences both on the individual and on the group level.

## I.2. Social exclusion and discrimination

In the 2004 Joint Report on Social Inclusion, the European Commission and European Council defined social exclusion as a “process whereby certain individuals are pushed to the edge of society and prevented from participating fully by virtue of their poverty, or lack of basic competencies and lifelong learning opportunities, or as a result of discrimination”.<sup>7</sup> It was also emphasized that social exclusion “does not only mean insufficient income. It even goes beyond participation in working life; it is manifest in fields such as housing, education, health and access to services. It affects not only individuals who suffered serious set-backs but social groups, particularly in urban and rural areas, who are subject to discrimination, segregation or the weakening of the traditional forms of social relations.”<sup>8</sup>

The European Commission’s Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities describes direct discrimination as occurring when a person is treated less favourably than another in a comparable situation because of their gender, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation; indirect discrimination is defined as occurring when an apparently neutral provision, criterion or practice would disadvantage people on the grounds of their gender, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation unless the practice can be objectively justified by a legitimate aim.<sup>9</sup>

Direct discrimination often overlaps with legal discrimination to be interpreted in the context of legal emancipation of relatively powerless social minority group members, while the more subtle indirect

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<sup>7</sup> European Commission (2004) Joint Report on Social Inclusion, Brussels [http://www.europemsi.org/background\\_definitions.php](http://www.europemsi.org/background_definitions.php)

<sup>8</sup> European Social Policy: Options for the Union Commission of the European Communities, DG Employment, Industrial Relations and Social Affairs, Brussels, 1993. COM (93) 551.

<sup>9</sup> Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities [http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/fundamental\\_rights/rights/gloss\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/fundamental_rights/rights/gloss_en.htm)

These definitions are employed also in paragraphs 8–9. of the CXXV./2003 Hungarian law on equal treatment and the promotion of equal opportunities.

forms are often manifested as social discrimination to be interpreted in the context of full social emancipation of social minority group members. Legal discrimination is a much more tangible asset than social discrimination because it is easier to identify and thus fight against legal grievances than decoding and altering social exclusion mechanisms often “hidden” in cultural norms and everyday social practices.

The main goals of our study included the mapping out of the social exclusion level of LGBT people in Hungary where social exclusion is defined as the *denial or non-realisation of civil, political, and social rights of citizenship* (Room 1995); and paying special attention to the mechanisms and the effects of discriminatory social practices as reflected by individual experiences.

## II. RESEARCH FINDINGS

### II.1. Research methods

The empirical research project – conducted by the Institute of Sociology in cooperation with the Háttér Support Society for LGBT People in Hungary and the Labrisz Lesbian Association between August and October, 2007, sponsored by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs – combined both quantitative and qualitative elements. In the quantitative research phase we conducted a self-administered survey in Budapest and in other locations outside Budapest (N=1122). The questionnaires were distributed in person with the help of regional LGBT organisations and bars, and were published in LGBT media products and internet portals. The size of the population we reached exceeded our expectations, which can indicate that the survey topics were considered important by our respondents. It also has to be noted that only 15% of the respondents was active in LGBT NGOs so we can assume that we have reached deeper layers of the Hungarian LGBT population, not just the relatively easily reachable activists.

Some questions on the questionnaire were about explicitly LGBT-related topics such as personal experiences of prejudice, discrimination, humiliation, violence related to being an L/G/B/T person; opin-

ions on same-sex marriage, and joint adoption. Additionally we also wanted to ask questions that had already been asked from samples statistically representative of the Hungarian population in order to be able to compare the results at least to a certain extent: thus we have also applied some standard – and not at all LGBT-specific – questions of the European Social Survey (ESS)<sup>10</sup> focussing on topics such as trust in institutions, political activity, religiousness, membership of socially discriminated groups. This way we had at least the theoretical possibility to compare some answers of the ESS sample statistically representing the Hungarian population in 2005 (N=1475) and those of our LGBT sample. However, because of the great difference between the two samples<sup>11</sup> comparisons between findings can only be illustrative.

Modes of data collection included oral and written forms: in person, as well as via mail, e-mail, and internet (See: Table I.). Personally administered data collection took place in Budapest (N=76) and in seven cities outside Budapest – Debrecen (N=50), Győr (N=24), Miskolc (N=37), Nyíregyháza (N=27), Pécs (N=24), Szeged (N=30), Székesfehérvár (N=19). Our research announcement was published in the *Mások* cultural political gay monthly. It was published together with the questionnaire in electronic form on the pride.hu and gay.hu internet portals, on the homepages, mailing lists and internet forums of the Háttér Support Society for LGBT People in Hungary, the Labrisz Lesbian Association, the Lambda Budapest Gay Association, the Szimpozion Cultural Educational and Leisure Association of Young GLBT People, and other formally as well as informally organised Hungarian LGBT groups. The filled in questionnaires could be sent back by mail or e-mail. Additionally with the help of the pride.

<sup>10</sup> [http://www.europeansocialsurvey.org/index.php?option=com\\_docman&task=cat\\_view&gid=102&Itemid=80](http://www.europeansocialsurvey.org/index.php?option=com_docman&task=cat_view&gid=102&Itemid=80) (2007-07-15)

<sup>11</sup> In the report we will refer to the ESS sample statistically representing the Hungarian population in 2005 as ESS-HU. The main features of the LGBT sample are described in Chapter II.2. The distributions of the samples according to age, education, and residence can be found in Table 2. In order to make the two samples statistically comparable we have attempted to introduce various filter variables, but as a result of filtering out 25-40 year old women and men with higher educational background and urban residence – being the dominant pattern in the LGBT sample – the size of the ESS-HU sample decreased to such a degree that it made statistical interpretation impossible. Therefore at each comparable variable we have used ANOVA variance analysis (Sig.=0,05) in order to determine whether there is a significant relationship between the sub-samples created by us, according to the criteria we have examined.

hu internet portal a specific page was created ([www.pride.hu/kutas2007/](http://www.pride.hu/kutas2007/)) where respondents could fill in the questionnaire on-line. Through all these channels we collected a grand total of 1122 filled in questionnaires between August 15, 2007 and October 25, 2007.

*Table 1. Proportion of questionnaires according to the mode of data collection*

Mode of data collection	Number of questionnaires (%)
In person	286 (25,5%)
In writing, e-mail	236 (21%)
Online	600 (53,5%)
Total	<b>1122</b> (100%)

On the basis of ANOVA variance analysis (Sig.=0,05) we can say that within the LGBT sample respondents who provided data in person were the youngest (mean: 27,7; median: 26), had the lowest proportion with residence in Budapest and the highest proportion with secondary school degree. Those who sent in their answers in writing via mail or e-mail had the highest proportion of male respondents and those with higher educational degrees (mean age: 28,9; median: 27). In the on-line category there was the highest proportion of female respondents and those with Budapest residence, as well as the relatively oldest ones (mean age: 29,3; median: 28).

The distribution of data collection modes shows that most respondents' choice (53,5%) was filling in the on-line questionnaire. This had its advantages and disadvantages at the same time.

It could count as an advantage that the on-line questionnaire provides full anonymity for respondents, which could make it easier for people who are not – yet – fully out to be able to participate in the research. Advantages also included that it was a quick and simple form of participation for LGBT people actively taking part in internet communities, for whom – especially in a rejecting social environment – it is often the cyberspace that provides a safe environment to encounter and experiment with queer identities (Gruszczynska 2007:101). On the other hand, this one-sided relationship between respondent and researcher limits the reliability of data, as well as the clarification possibilities of research related questions.

Further limitations of our research project derived from the difference between the design and the realisation of the research: as this was the first national survey on LGBT discrimination – commis-

sioned by the government – there was a lack of previous research experience, and our original research plan included only personally administered questionnaires (N=200) and in-depth interviews. According to our original theoretical concept we would have examined LGBT people with the survey in a somewhat homogenized way, primarily as members of socially discriminated minority groups, whose main “unifying force” is the common political interest in putting equal treatment policies into practice; while in-depth interviewing could have provided opportunities to focus on the variety of personal identities and experiences. Thus we did not have questions asking about the respondent’s sexual orientation and gender identity in the survey. We were aware that the complex divisions between sexuality and gender, and sexual identity, relation and behaviour categories are difficult to represent in surveys: representing the diversity of sexual and gender identities in an inclusive way might require a different formatting of such questions – “certainly more than one bold question” (Reynolds 2001; 75). Some researchers emphasize that in addition to sexual behaviour there are many aspects of sexual orientation that should be considered, including sexual attraction, sexual fantasies, emotional preference, social preference, lifestyle preference, and sexual identity, and different partner preferences in each of the given aspects and certain variations in time (past, present, ideal) should also be allowed for (Klein et al.; 1985), while others point to the potential danger of under-reporting in the case of asking about respondents’ sexual identity on the assumption that respondents are less likely to ascribe themselves a stigmatizing identity than to report a particular practice (Wellings et al.; 1994).<sup>12</sup>

However, after collecting a much larger sample than was originally planned, we think it would have been useful to include – even very simplifying – questions on sexual orientation and gender iden-

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<sup>12</sup> For example, Schluter (1992) “measured” the sexual orientation of respondents by asking identity- as well as practice-related questions: How often do you usually have: homosexual (gay) sex / heterosexual sex?; If there exists, say, a spectrum of hetero/homosexuality (that is from “straight” to “gay”), where would you be located (considering sexual behaviour, erotic attraction, and romantic feelings)?; Have your sexual leanings changed over the course of your life? If so, how exactly?; Do you consider yourself to be: gay/lesbian / bisexual / straight / other. See: [http://www.gaydata.org/04\\_Measures/ms009\\_Schluter/ms009\\_Schluter\\_Questions\\_English.pdf](http://www.gaydata.org/04_Measures/ms009_Schluter/ms009_Schluter_Questions_English.pdf) (2007-03-01)

tity categorization into our survey.<sup>13</sup> It would have also been useful to have questions on the degree of coming out of the respondents, measuring their social visibility. As we did not have these questions we had to rely on data gained from the personal accounts of discrimination and the in-depth interviews, which showed that some of the respondents haven't experienced discriminatory practices because of their hiding lifestyle – and they led a hidden LGBT life exactly because of the fear of discrimination.

Another significant limitation of our research was rooted in the fact that we used a *classic community sample* that – while its size (n=1122) is close to the sample sizes (n=1400-1500) usually used in national representative samples – does not have the validating force of a statistically representative sample. It is because LGBT status, similarly to other identity-related and/or otherwise “fluid” categories such as belief or in some cases ethnic origin or disability, for instance, mental illness, is not an officially recorded and not at all strictly recordable personal characteristic of people. Hence, the “proper representation” of LGBT people is very problematic, if not impossible, especially in large scale quantitative research. It can also be assumed that our LGBT sample includes more of those people who are frequenting virtual or real community venues, bars, discussion and internet forums, and more of those who are leading a less hidden LGBT life.

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<sup>13</sup> According to the findings of the Eurobarometer survey of 2006 on Discrimination in the European Union presenting the results from a survey about social attitudes on discrimination and inequality in Europe, 65% of respondents would be willing to provide personal information on their sexual orientation as part of a census on an anonymous basis to combat discrimination. The more detailed socio-demographic analyses showed that people's willingness to provide information depends to a certain degree on age and education. The proportion of willingness is 72% of the age cohorts of 15-24 and 25-39 year old people, 66% of the 40-54 age cohort, and only 56% of people older than 55; while it is 73% of respondents who are still studying, 71% of those who completed their full-time education at the age of 20 or older, 65% of those who completed their full-time education in the ages of 16 to 19, and 58% of those who completed their full-time education before the age of 15. These findings indicate the possibility that the willingness of people to reveal information on their sexual orientation can be increased if the issue is presented in the context of combating discrimination. See: Special EUROBAROMETER 263 “Discrimination in the European Union” (published in January 2007). The survey was carried out in the twenty-five Member States of the European Union and in the two acceding countries between 7 June and 12 July 2006. [http://ec.europa.eu/public\\_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs\\_263\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_263_en.pdf) (2007-07-10)

Time and thematic limitations of data collection and analysis as well as lack of previous Hungarian empirical research of a similar kind were also seen as limiting our research. The fact that the diversity of LGBT life experiences can become noteworthy for policy-makers only in discrimination and exclusion related negative contexts was interpreted by us as thematic limitation.

Our recommendation is that all these limitations should be taken into consideration when designing and conducting a – hopefully – growing number of future empirical research projects.

## II. 2. Main features of the LGBT sample

Distributions of the LGBT and the ESS HU samples according to gender, age, education and residence can be found in Table II. If we compare the two populations it is clear that the LGBT sample has more male respondents, more youngsters, people with higher educational background and with urban (especially Budapest) residence.

Under-representation of women can be explained by the pattern of women's lower participation rate in public speeches and story telling, while men are more likely to get involved in these activities in order to protect their social status (Tannen 2001). While research studies on LGBT themes are often characterised by over-representation of male samples, in our case the dominance of male respondents is not the consequence of a "heteropatriarchal" approach (Kitzinger-Perkins 1993) but rather it has to do with the lower social visibility level of women in general, which can also be detected in the difference between the gay and the lesbian community infrastructure.

Previous international research findings also showed (McManus 2003; Castells 1997; D'Emilio 1993; Quam-Whitford 1992) that older LGBT people with lower educational background living in rural areas are especially hard to be reached by researchers, which can be explained by the advantages provided by more tolerant, less controlled urban environments with more developed LGBT infrastructure, and/or the camouflage life strategies of older LGBT people growing up in a less accepting social climate, as well as the higher awareness level characteristically going together with higher educational attainment.

*Table II. Distributions of samples according to gender, age, education and residence (%)*

Sample Distributions	LGBT sample (N=1122)	Representative ESS-HU sample (N=1475)
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	73,19	46,8
Female	26,09	53,2
Other <sup>1</sup>	0,71	–
Total	100	100
<b>Age</b>	<b>Mean: 28,8<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>Mean: 45,3<sup>3</sup></b>
Younger than 20	11,3	6,7
20–29	49,4	17
30–39	27,7	18,5
40–49	8	14,9
Older than 50	3,6	42,8
Total	100	100
<b>Education</b>		
Max. elementary	6,43	64,0
Secondary education	50,63	26,2
Higher education	42,95	9,9
Total	100	100
<b>Residence</b>		
City (Budapest)	66,70 (47,67)	33 (18,4)
Town	18,98	29,5
Village	8,86	34,2
Other (abroad) <sup>4</sup>	3,31 ( 2,15)	3,3 –
Total	100	100

<sup>1</sup> The 'other' category was introduced for the potential choices of transgender and transsexual respondents. Here the very low response rate can indicate that only very few people identify themselves this way; on the other hand it should also be mentioned that for some people transsexuality is only a transitory feature and not a durable aspect of identity formation (Takács 2004). In our analyses we worked with only the male and female categories.

<sup>2</sup> Median: 27; Range: 14–80.

<sup>3</sup> Median: 45; Range: 15–91.

<sup>4</sup> We haven't analysed the answers of respondents with foreign place of birth and foreign residence, as the goal of our research was to examine the situation of LGBT people in Hungary.

The economic activity rates of respondents can be seen in Table III. which shows that there are more active workers (72%) and students (21,7%) and much less retired people (1,3%) in the LGBT sample than in the ESS-HU sample.

*Table III. Economic activity (%)*

	LMBT	ESS-HU
<b>Working</b>	72	54
<b>Studying</b>	21,7	12,4
<b>Unemployed</b>	5	6,4
<b>Retired</b>	1,3	27,3
Total	100	100

Within the economically active LGBT people 81,3% is employee, 14,2% is self-employed, and 4,5% is casual labourer. (See: Table IV.)

*Table IV. Occupation types (%)*

Foglalkozás	%
<b>Casual labourer</b> (Only occasional work)	4,5
<b>Self-employed</b>	
Farm worker	0,4
Highly qualified professional	7,7
Shop owner, artisan, other forms of self-employment	2,3
Business owner/partner	3,9
<b>Employee</b>	
Highly qualified professional (doctor, teacher, engineer)	20,9
Senior manager, executive in big business	1,9
Middle manager	11,4
Clerical occupations	17,7
Sales and travelling occupations (sales manager, driver)	1,9
Service occupations (hospital, restaurant, police)	13,6
Foreman	3,5
Skilled worker	4,9
Semi-skilled worker	5
Unskilled worker	0,4
Total	100

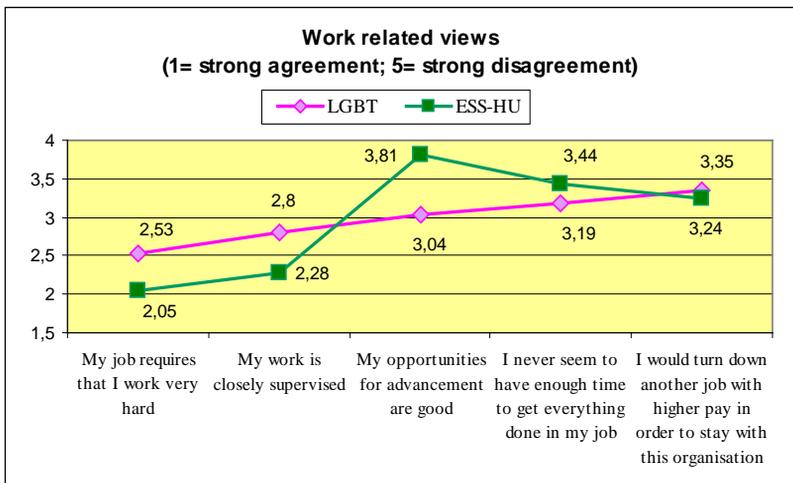
More than a quarter of our respondents (27,6%) was being unemployed and seeking work for a period of more than three months, almost 30% was being unemployed for a period of more than three months in the last 5 years, and more than 12% had paid work in another country for a period of 6 months or more in the last 10 years (See: Table V.).

Table V. Unemployment – working abroad (%)

	LMBT	ESS-HU
Ever being unemployed and seeking work for a period of more than three months	27,6	27,8
Being unemployed for a period of more than three months in the last 5 years	29,5	52,8
Had paid work in another country for a period of 6 months or more in the last 10 years	12,5	2,6

Comparison of work related views showed that LGBT respondents felt less that their *work is closely supervised*, while they more often experienced that they *never seem to have enough time to get everything done* and that their *opportunities for advancement are good* (See: Table VI.).<sup>14</sup>

Table VI. Work related views



According to the subjective evaluation of household income more than half of LGBT respondents (51,7%) is coping on their present income, more than a quarter is living comfortably on their present income, and about a fifth of them finds it difficult or very difficult

<sup>14</sup> In the case of these three variables the median values were also different (*close supervision* – LGBT: 3, ESS-HU: 2; *never seem to have enough time* – LGBT: 3 ESS-HU: 4; *opportunities for advancement* – LGBT: 3, ESS-HU:4), while in the case of the other two variables median values were the same in both samples (*hard work* – 2; *turning down another job with higher pay* – 3).

on their present income (See: Table VII.). While the representative ESS-HU sample's results reflect a lower household income level estimation. In both samples there is significant difference between the results according to age, gender, education and residence: younger people, male respondents, those with higher education and living in Budapest reported on higher household income.

*Table VII. Household income*

	<b>LMBT</b>	<b>ESS-HU</b>
Mean (Median) value	1,97 (2)	2,54 (2)
<b>Distribution (%)</b>		
1. Living comfortably on present income	27,6	5
2. Coping on present income	51,7	48,7
3. Finding it difficult on present income	16,6	34
4. Finding it very difficult on present income	4,1	12,3

The distribution of LGBT households according to gender, age, education and place of residence (See: Table VIII.) shows that one quarter of our respondents lives together with a same-sex partner, and 5% of them (8 women and 5 men) raised one or more children together. Most people living with a same-sex partner are in the 30-39 age category (39,4%), with higher educational background and living in Budapest. At the same time most people living in single households are older than 40, living in bigger cities (especially in Budapest) and have a higher educational degree. According to ANOVA analysis results there was a very strong connection (Sig.: 0,00) between LGBT household types and residence in Budapest: people living in single household or living with a same-sex partner were characterized by Budapest residence. Only a small group of respondents were married: they were more likely to be older than 40 and living in rural areas. The highest proportion of respondents was living with parents: they were characteristically the youngest ones and those living in small settlement in the countryside.

Table VIII. LGBT household types (%)

	Single household	Living with same-sex partner	Married	Living with parent(s)
<b>Whole LGBT sample (%)</b>	<b>23,5</b>	<b>24,9</b>	<b>3,7</b>	<b>41,2</b>
<b>Gender</b>				
Female	22,1	30,1	6	41,8
Male	28,3	27,5	2,9	41,3
<b>Age</b>				
Younger than 25	11,2	16,1	0,8	71,9
25-40	35,6	37,4	4,7	22,3
Older than 40	43,4	31,3	11,1	14,1
<b>Place of residence I.</b>				
Big city	32,5	33,7	3,3	30,5
City/Town	16,6	19,2	5,7	58,5
Village	11,2	10,1	4,5	74,2
<b>Place of residence II.</b>				
Budapest	36,1	35,9	2,8	25,2
Countryside	18,6	21,9	4,6	54,9
<b>Education level</b>				
Primary	8,5	10,2	–	81,4
Secondary	19,3	23,3	3	54,4
Tertiary	38,2	36,8	5	20

LGBT respondents spent an average of 1.4 hours with housework on a weekday, and 2.1 hours on the weekend. They provided unpaid help (childcare, other care, housework or home maintenance) for family members and relatives outside their own household once a month at average, and for their friends somewhat less often than once a month.<sup>15</sup> In the ESS-HU sample where the frequency of providing unpaid help was lower than in the LGBT sample, there was significant connection between this variable and the respondents' age, education and residence: older people, those with higher educational background and living in the countryside were more likely to help their family members and relatives.

Examining housework related views (See: Table IX.) we have found similar results in both samples. For example, women found housework more stressful than men in both samples, but in the ESS-

<sup>15</sup> The question on providing unpaid help for friends was included only in our LGBT questionnaire.

HU sample men found housework more monotonous than women (the only such result among the 24 European countries), while in the LGBT sample lesbian were more likely to find housework more monotonous than gay men.

Table IX. Housework<sup>16</sup>

Házimunka	LMBT átlag (Median)	ESS-HU átlag (Median)
I can choose myself when and how to do housework	1,9 (1)	1,8 (2)
I find my housework monotonous	2,8 (3)	2,9 (3)
I find my housework stressful	3,3 (3)	3,4 (4)
There are so many things to do at home, I often run out of time before I get them all done	3,3 (4)	3,2 (3)

LGBT respondents found that their health in general was good (Mean: 2,2; median: 2), while ESS-HU respondents found it fair (Mean: 2,64; median: 3).<sup>17</sup> In both samples there were significant relationship between subjective evaluation of health and gender as well as age: younger people and male respondents typically found that their health was better than that of others (in the ESS-HU sample place of residence also mattered: people living in Budapest reported on to be healthier).

In both samples it was almost the same proportion of respondents who reported that they can discuss intimate and personal matters with others (91%–92%). According to the ANOVA test results in the ESS-HU sample younger people had more chance to discuss intimate and personal matters, while in the LGBT sample people living in Budapest were in a better position. Subjective evaluations of happiness were also very similar in both examined populations (Means: 6,2–6,3; Median values: 7–7), while level of satisfaction with life as a whole was somewhat higher in the LGBT sample (Mean: 5,5; median:5)<sup>18</sup> In both samples younger people and those with better education (and in the case of LGBT respondents also those living in Budapest) reported significantly higher level of happiness and satisfaction with life.

<sup>16</sup> 5 point agreement scale: 1=strongly agree; 5=strongly disagree.

<sup>17</sup> 5 point scale: 1=very good, 2=good, 3=fair, 4=bad, 5=very bad.

<sup>18</sup> 10 point scale: 0=extremely unhappy/dissatisfied; 10=extremely happy/satisfied.

Concerning topics related to trust in people LGBT respondents seemed to have somewhat higher level of trust than respondents of the representative sample (See: Table X.).

Table X. Trust in people<sup>19</sup>

	LMBT	ESS-HU
Most people can be trusted	4,56 (5)	3,95 (4)
Most people would try to be fair	4,69 (5)	4,49 (5)
Most of the time people try to be helpful	4,24 (4)	4 (4)

According to the variance analysis results higher educational background had significant positive effect on these three variables in both samples. Also in both samples there was about the same level of agreement concerning the statement that *citizens should spend at least some of their free time helping others* (Means: 2,1–2,2; Both median values: 2).

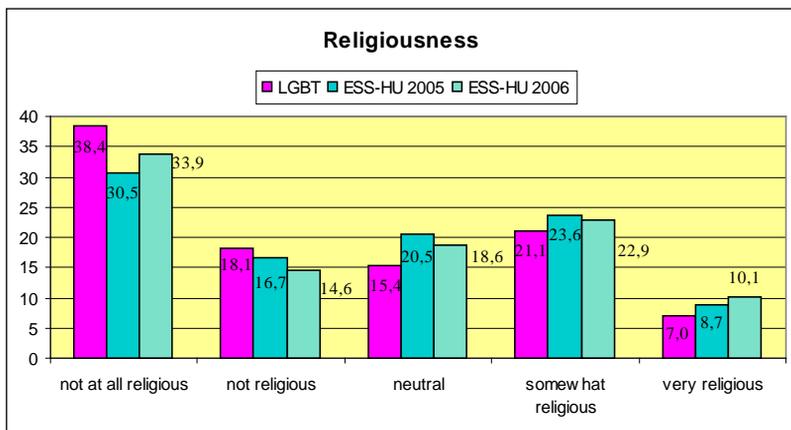
Examination of religiousness showed that in comparison to the Hungarian representative sample (62%) only half of this proportion said in the LGBT sample that they considered themselves to belong to a particular religion or denomination (31%), while more than a quarter of the LGBT respondents (26%) and less than a quarter ESS-HU respondent (22%) reported that they used to consider themselves to belong to a particular religion or denomination in the past but not any longer (See: Table XI. where ESS data from 2005 and 2006 are added).<sup>20</sup> In the representative samples female respondents, older ones and people living in rural settings reported significantly higher level of religiousness than others, the LGBT sample was homogenous in this respect.

Concerning political orientation, in both the LGBT (Mean: 4,5; median: 5) and the ESS-HU samples (Mean: 5,1; median: 5) the respondents' age and educational background had significant effect on their political orientation: older people (older than 40) and those

<sup>19</sup> On the negative end of the 10 point scales there were the following statements: *You can't be too careful; Most people would try to take advantage of me; People mostly look out for themselves.*

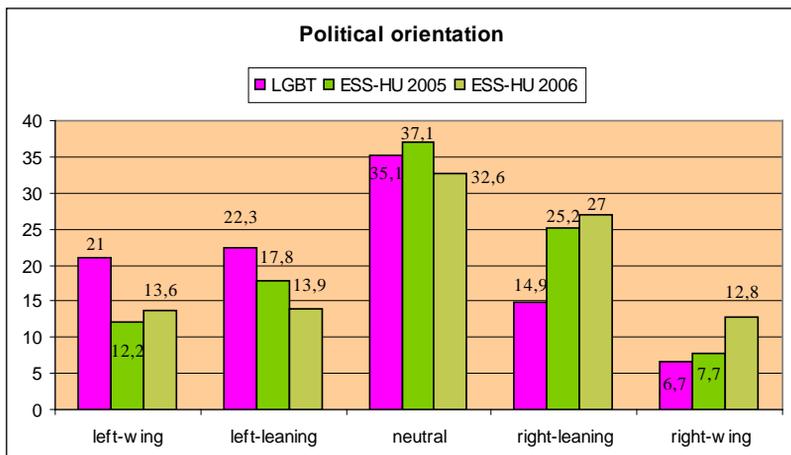
<sup>20</sup> 10 point scale (0=not at all religious, 10=very religious): where from 0-2 values we have created the *not at all religious*, from 3-4 *not religious*, from 5 *neutral*, from 6-7 *somewhat religious* and from 8-10 *very religious* categories in all three samples.

Table XI. Religiosity



with higher (than secondary) education were more likely to report on left-wing orientation, while younger people with lower education were more likely to be right-wing oriented. (See: Table XII. where ESS data from 2005 and 2006 are also added)<sup>21</sup>

Table XII. Political orientation



<sup>21</sup> 10 point scale (0=left, 10=right) where from 0–2 values we have created the *left-wing*, from 3–4 the *left-leaning*, from 5 the *neutral*, from 6–7 the *right-leaning* and from 8–10 the *right-wing* categories in all three samples.

Examination of the political activity of the respondents during the last year showed a higher level of activity of LGBT respondents (See: Table XIII.) According to the ANOVA test results within the LGBT sample (younger) age and (higher) education had a positive effect on contacting a politician, working in a political party, signing petitions and boycotting certain products. Participation in public demonstration was not only effected by educational background but also by the gender of respondents: (lesbian) women were more active participants of demonstrations than (gay) men.

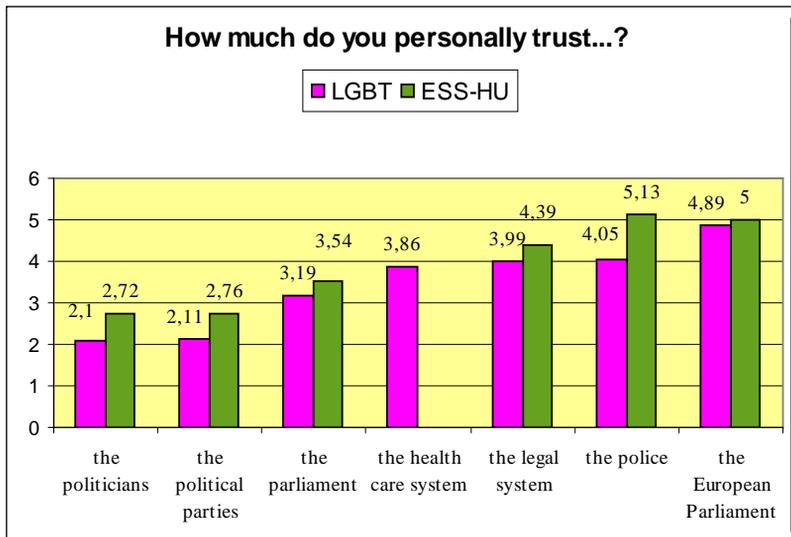
Table XIII. Political activity (%)

	LMBT	ESS-HU
worked in a political party or action group	5	0,8
worked in another organisation or association	9,5	1,4
worn or displayed a campaign badge/sticker	11,4	0,9
contacted a politician, government or local government official	18,5	8,9
participated in a lawful public demonstration	23,5	1,3
signed a petition	35,1	4,7
boycotted certain products	35,5	4,1

Examination of personal trust in different political actors and institutions indicated that in the representative Hungarian sample gender had a significant effect on trust in politicians (women tended to trust more in politicians than men did), and younger age (younger than 25) positively influenced trust in the Parliament, the legal system and political parties. In the LGBT sample (higher) education and (Budapest) residence had significant positive influence on trust in the Hungarian Parliament, the legal system, the police, and the European Parliament, while gender also had a great effect: (lesbian) women seemed to trust less in the Hungarian legal system, the police and the EP than (gay) men.

Finally we asked our respondents how much they agree with the statement that *gay men and lesbians should be free to live their own life as they wish* (where freedom of lifestyle is meant as being free/entitled to live as gays and lesbians).<sup>22</sup> Here there was a great difference between the results of the two samples: the ESS-HU answers (mean: 2,8; median: 3) indicated mainly “neither agree, nor

<sup>22</sup> 5 point scale: 1=strongly agree; 5=strongly disagree.

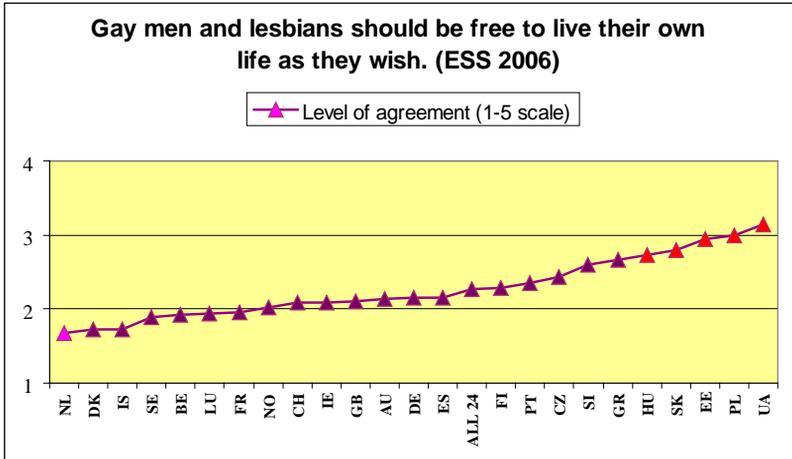
Table XIV. Personal trust in institutions (%)<sup>23</sup>

disagree” values, while – not surprisingly – the LGBT answers expressed almost unanimous strong agreement with the statement (mean: 1,5; median: 1). Table XV. shows the evaluation of this question in 24 European countries (N=45.681) in 2006. Comparing the median values in the 24 countries it was only in the Netherlands where the respondents expressed strong agreement (mean: 1,7; median: 1), and in 18 other countries they expressed agreement with this statement (median: 3), while the lowest level of acceptance was expressed in Hungary, Slovakia, Estonia, Poland and Ukraine (median: 3).

On the basis of the examination of the European context it can be stated that Hungary belongs to the not too tolerant societies where the acceptance of the freedom of gay and lesbian lifestyles is not at all well developed, which aspect plays an important role in the functioning of social exclusion mechanisms effecting LGBT people in Hungary.

<sup>23</sup> The question on trust in the health care system was included only in the LGBT questionnaire.

Table XV. Tolerance towards gays and lesbians in a European context  
(1= strong agreement; 5= strong disagreement)



### II.3. Interpreting discrimination and oppression of LGBT people

In our analysis we have applied a structural concept of oppression (Young 1990) focussing on the disadvantage and injustice LGBT people, as individuals and members of oppressed social groups, suffer because of everyday practices resulting from unquestioned norms and assumptions underlying institutional rules. In this context the “systemic character of oppression implies that an oppressed group need not have a correlate oppressing group” as “oppression designates the disadvantage and injustice some people suffer not because a tyrannical power coerces them, but because of the everyday practices of a well-intentioned liberal society” (Young 1990:41).

According to Young there are five criteria for determining the scope and extend of oppression: economic *exploitation*, socio-economic *marginalization*, and *powerlessness* explain oppression mainly in economic terms (who works for whom, who does not work, and who can make important decisions), while *cultural imperialism* and systematic *violence* go beyond features primarily related to the social division of work.

*Cultural imperialism* refers to the universalization of a dominant group's experience and culture, and its establishment as the norm by projecting their own experience as representative of humanity as such. In this context "the difference of women from men, American Indians or Africans from Europeans, Jews from Christians, homosexuals from heterosexuals, workers from professionals, becomes reconstructed largely as deviance and inferiority" (Young 1990:59). The term (*systemic*) *violence* covers physical attacks as well as incidents of harassment, intimidation, or ridicule simply for the purpose of degrading, humiliating, or stigmatizing the victims; and the "oppression of violence consists not only in direct victimization, but in the daily knowledge shared by all members of oppressed groups that they are *liable* to violation, solely on account of their group identity" (Young 1990:62). It is often characterized by irrationality, involving insecurities, such as fear of identity loss, on the part of the violators. This kind of violence becomes systemic if institutionalized social practices encourage, tolerate, or enable the perpetration of violence against members of specific groups – as cultural imperialism itself intersects with violence.

According to our research findings our LGBT respondents suffered from heteronormative and heterosexist<sup>24</sup> manifestations of *cultural imperialism*: how the dominant meanings of society rendered the particular perspective of one's own group invisible at the same time as they stereotype one's group and mark it out as the Other (Young 1990:58-9). It was also documented by our study that openly lived ordinary LGBT lifestyles could make our respondents the targets of *systemic violence* in forms of harassment, intimidation, ridicule, or even physical attacks.

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<sup>24</sup> Heterosexism is the belief, stated or implied, that heterosexuality is superior (theologically, morally, socially, emotionally, behaviourally, and/or in some other way) to homosexuality; the presumption that all people are heterosexual (may be conscious or unconscious); the belief that all people should be heterosexual; prejudicial attitudes or discriminatory acts against non-heterosexual individuals which follow from the above beliefs (these may be conscious or unconscious, overt or covert, intentional or non-intentional, formal or informal) (Roffman 2000). As an institutionalised system of oppression, heterosexism negatively affects LGBT people as well as some heterosexual individuals who do not subscribe to traditional standards of masculinity and femininity (Zimmerman 2000).

The main forms and the extent of discriminatory practices affecting LGBT people in Hungary were documented by our survey research as well as the personal accounts of discrimination sent to us by LGBT respondents (N=150) and structured interviews (N=14)<sup>25</sup>.

In the survey questionnaire the (ESS standard) questions “*Would you describe yourself as being a member of a group that is discriminated against in this country?*” and “*On what grounds is your group discriminated against?*” were used to map out the extent of an imaginary community membership, while the LGBT-specific question “*Have you ever experienced prejudice, discrimination, humiliation, violence, attacks targeting you as an L/G/B/T person (in your family, circle of friends, primary school [if yes: by teachers/fellow students/curricula/other:.....], secondary school [if yes: by teachers/...], higher educational institution [if yes: by teachers/...], any public institutions, workplace, religious community, Hungarian health care system, Hungarian legal system, Hungarian media, political organisation, civil organisation/NGO, sport club, bars/clubs, legal demonstration, shops/restaurants, any other situation:...)?*” was about personal experiences. This way we were able to examine the community and individual as well as theoretical and practical dimensions of social discrimination targeting LGBT people in Hungary. However, it should be noted that undertaking socially discriminated minority group membership wasn’t necessarily connected to personal experiences, as individual experiences of discrimination didn’t necessarily lead to assignment of socially discriminated minority group membership. According to one of our respondents: “*This question [on socially discriminated minority group membership] is very stupid. Gays are suffering from a lot of disadvantages worldwide, from which I personally do not experience anything. I cannot say anything on behalf of an imaginary community!*” (M 54 Bp).<sup>26</sup>

More than 75% of our respondents identified themselves as members of socially discriminated minority group. This very high proportion is not at all an unexpected result if we take into consideration the goal of our study and the targeted community sample we used. What can be surprising is the ESS 2006 research findings showing that not only in Hungary but also in the sample of the 24 European

<sup>25</sup> The 14 interviews were conducted with 6 men and 8 women in writing (average age: 32,6; range: 22–57).

<sup>26</sup> Gender (F=female, M=male), age and type of residence of the respondent are provided after each quotation.

country as well as in the Netherlands, being a model country of social tolerance for a long time, the proportion of socially discriminated minority group membership was only 5-7% (See: Table XVI.).

*Table XVI. Would you describe yourself as being a member of a group that is discriminated against in this country? (ESS standard question)*

2006	All (24 countries) (N=45.681)	NL (N=1881)	HU (N=1498)	HU-LGBT (N=1009)
Igen	5,9	6,8	5,2	75,7
Nem	94,1	93,2	94,8	24,3

If we compare the frequency of grounds of discrimination in the two samples, we will find very different results: especially concerning gender and religion (See: Table XVII). In the Hungarian representative sample the most often mentioned ground of discrimination was age, followed by the other category, then colour or race, religion, nationality, disability, ethnic group and at the end there were gender, language and sexual orientation (with 0 value). On the other hand, in the LGBT sample sexuality,<sup>27</sup> the most frequently mentioned ground of discrimination was followed by gender, age, religion, colour or race, ethnic group, nationality, 'other', disability, and finally language. In the LGBT sample 'other' grounds of discrimination included state of health (HIV-infection, depression, overweight), (single) motherhood and vegetarianism.

*Table XVII. Frequency of grounds of discrimination*

(ESS standard question: On what grounds is your group discriminated against?)

ESS-HU 06	(%)	LGBT	(%)
Age	2,1	Sexuality (Sexual orientation) (Gender identity)	95,3 (86,6) (36,1)
Other	1,2	Gender	10,0
Colour or race	0,7	Age	8,3
Nationality	0,6	Religion	5,8
Religion	0,6	Colour or race	4,9
Ethnic group	0,4	Ethnic group	3,6
Disability	0,4	Nationality	3,5
Language	0	Other	2,9
Gender	0	Disability	2,6
Sexuality	0	Language	1,2

<sup>27</sup> In our questionnaire the sexuality category was divided into sexual orientation and gender identity.

These results can indicate that the majority of the Hungarian population – similarly to the populations in the 24 countries taking part in the European Social Survey in 2006 – does not sense social discrimination, or if they had this kind of personal experience, they do not connect it to any social minority group membership. The fact that the relationship between social discrimination and social minority group membership was sensed in a much stronger way among LGBT respondents – especially those with higher educational background, aged 25-40, and living in the capital – supports the assumption that the different results between the samples can be explained not so much with the lack of discrimination but rather with the lack of skills to recognize discrimination.

It is important to note that 10% of the LGBT sample, typically female respondents,<sup>28</sup> experienced gender based discrimination, which on the one hand can be an indicator of the multiple discrimination of lesbian women, and on the other hand, it can also show that lesbian women are aware of their social minority group membership not only on the basis of sexual orientation but also on the basis of gender.

Being discriminated as a woman is more difficult to tell about, it is more hidden, sometimes even for myself it doesn't become clear immediately. It is deep, and wide – but because I "got used to it", it isn't so painful. (F 29 Bp)

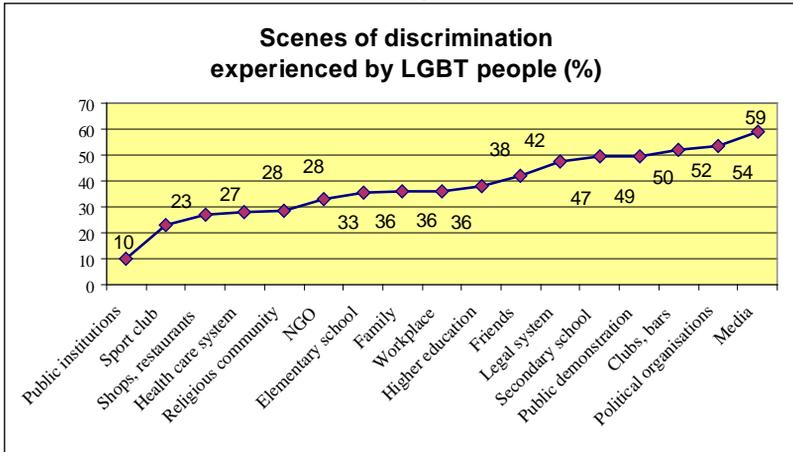
#### II.4. Main scenes of discrimination of LGBT people

As a starting point we have counted the occurrence of discrimination in the scenes we have asked about in our questionnaire, including family, circle of friends, primary school, secondary school, higher educational institution, public institutions, workplace, religious community, Hungarian health care system, Hungarian legal system, Hungarian media, political organisation, civil organisation/NGO, sport club, bars/clubs, legal demonstration, shops and restaurants (See: Table XVIII.). Since the frequency of personally felt discriminatory experiences within our community sample can only provide a token measure, we concentrate our analysis of the 150 personal accounts of discrimination and the 14 structured interviews in the

<sup>28</sup> ANOVA test – Sig.=0,00

first place on the most important scenes of socialisation, including family, circle of friends, school, media, workplace and religious community, in order to have a deeper understanding of social exclusion and structural oppression of LGBT people in Hungary.

**Table XVIII. Scenes of discrimination reflected by personal experiences of discrimination, prejudice, humiliation, aggression targeting one specifically as an L/G/B/T person**



Examination of personal experiences of discrimination showed that the LGBT population cannot be considered homogenous. Among the main agents and institutions of socialization lesbian women encountered more discrimination in their own families and in the Hungarian legal system than gay men, while gay men suffered more from discrimination in elementary and secondary schools. Respondents aged 40 or older more often experienced discriminatory practices at their workplace than younger ones. People with higher educational background and those living in Budapest reported on more discriminatory experiences in the legal system, in the media, in a political organisation or in a public demonstration than people with lower education and those living in the countryside. Respondents living in Budapest encountered more discrimination in healthcare institution, religious communities, civil organisations (NGOs), and less discrimination on behalf of their elementary school teachers than those living in the countryside.

### II.4.1. *Social invisibility*

One of the basic problems of conducting research on LGBT people derives from their social invisibility. LGBT people are (usually) not marked by their bodies and therefore not recognisable at first sight. In most cases it is up to the individual whether they come out as an LGBT person or not. In order to claim recognition and equality it is necessary to make disadvantages socially recognisable: it is very hard, if not impossible, to articulate the interests or defend the rights of socially invisible actors. However, discrimination against LGBT people can remain hidden in a lot of instances because coming out of invisibility is a very critical process for most LGBT people involving risks of being excluded from the ‘normal functioning’ of heteronormative society.

Previous research findings indicate that those “lesbians and gay men who have escaped social condemnation have, more often than not, lived a life hidden from public view, altering behaviour, avoiding certain places and people in an effort to retain an outward ‘air’ of heterosexuality... In contrast, those who have lived openly have often faced social, political, economic and religious condemnation, sometimes receiving the blame for acts or events that are unrelated to their sexual orientation” (Rivers – Carragher 2003: 375). Others refer to the life strategy based on the decision to remain hidden – or rather imprisoned – in privacy in order to avoid negative experiences and discrimination as an illusionary, “unbearable comfort” (Švab – Kuhar 2005), which can also have high costs.

According to our respondents the level of their social visibility had an influence on the frequency of the discriminatory practices they have encountered:

I think it unfortunate to compare the lives, experienced discrimination, and prejudice of two gay people, one of whom had come out and the other not. Obviously the not out, and that’s the majority, will not be faced with such problems. However, it is precisely because of these social problems that they don’t dare to come out. (M 25 city)

Nobody knows about me that I am lesbian. I couldn’t dare to risk coming out. This way I was not directly humiliated. (F 21 city)

The fact that they don't know about me that I am lesbian is lurking behind the "No" answers. (F 67 Bp)

I didn't experience [discrimination], because I have not uncovered my bisexuality, because I reckon that I would be discriminated against. I have revealed it only to those people whom I trust completely! (M 25 Bp)

Because of prejudice I daren't come out for my orientation. (M 50 town)

SO FAR I have never been put to shame or suffered prejudice from acquaintances, relatives or friends WHO KNEW that I am gay. I would only expect such treatment from people who are politically overheated and who don't know, or if they think they know I didn't come out to them. (F32 Bp)

Open discrimination is rare in my experience. The secrecy is the worst, or rather having to remember in front of whom to keep up the secret and for whom that is no longer necessary; on holiday the cramped worry about whether the staff has guessed and if so what then, and if not, what will happen when they do ... (M 37 Bp)

Young people, who invent "survival strategies" to hide, spend huge amounts of energy on monitoring their behaviour. This can imply the development of different youth socialisation patterns for heterosexual and those non-heterosexual adolescents who wish to remain hidden: the latter ones are learning to conceal themselves during the period while most of the others are discovering how to express themselves socially (Martin 1982).

If I never suffered abasement because of my gayness, that is maybe just because I don't tell. I have to keep it secret largely, if I don't want this to happen. (M 26 Bp)

The adolescent years are especially challenging for LGBT youth because of their increased emotional and economic dependency on others at home and at school – disclosure of their orientation and identity during adolescence and young adulthood is thus largely dependent on the social support they have from families and friends (D'Augelli – Hershberger – Pilkington 1998). It has also been emphasized that because of the under-representation of lesbians in society there has been an absence of positive lesbian role models, which has, in turn, resulted in many women feeling increasingly isolated, thus reducing the likelihood of them taking positive steps towards 'coming out' (Rothblum 1990).

### II.4.2. Family

In contrast with other, for example, ethnic minority youth, who generally do not face problems of racism and religious intolerance within their own families, “for gays and lesbians abuse often begins at home” (Nardi – Bolton 1998:141). LGBT people often experience homophobia and transphobia – i.e. prejudice, hatred, fear of LGBT people and same-sex attraction – within their family due to the unappreciative perception of what it is to be gay, lesbian or transgender, which may prevent young people being open about their LGBT identification, and may cause them to begin living a double life. Homophobia and transphobia in the family can develop into verbal as well as physical violence, and can lead to young people being thrown out of home or deciding to leave home, and thus for some can lead even to homelessness (Gold 2005, McNamee 2006).

36% of our respondents experienced prejudice or discrimination within their family:

I think that the most drastic discrimination affects LGBT people within their families. That is my own experience and it is the general experience as well. (F 38 Bp)

They threw me out of the house with two bags of clothes because I am gay. (M 19 town)

My family disinherited me because I am gay. (M 23 Bp)

I live with my parents and with my 15 year old sister, my parents look after me. Our relationship is good, in general I can best count on them. They really condemn gay people, likewise my grandparents and my other relatives. My mother once said “God forbid that you will be a faggot, my daughter!” My father thinks that “faggots” should be exterminated. According to him lesbians are pathetic, burnt out, ugly women who are not wanted by men, or who simply want to draw attention to themselves in this way. Even if they don’t really seriously think these things it’s still humiliating and frightening to hear them. (F 21 city)

My mother made my life at home impossible after I came out to her and she saw my partner give a statement on TV as a lesbian, so my situation is difficult spiritually and bad materially. I had to move out into a bed-sit urgently, not at the time of my choosing. Later, when I went to visit her, she harassed me verbally because I am lesbian. When I announced that I was moving in with my partner she sent me packing. We didn’t speak for half a year, then she looked me up and we made up. Now she knows that if she speaks to me hurtfully I will go, so she is watching more carefully what she says to me in connection with my being gay. (F 34 Bp)

My parents never accepted my otherness and therefore forced me to marry, which was very hard for me. I was unhappy because I couldn't do what I would have wanted. Now, since I have become an adult, my mother died, I changed my life and divorced. I live in a very happy relationship with my boyfriend. (M 32 village)

I am 17 and gay. I do very well at school and had a good relationship with my parents, but I still didn't dare tell them. Instead I came out to a really good friend, who accepted it entirely. However, after being outed I had to tell my parents as well. They condemned it out of hand and threatened that they would take me out of (boarding) school so I would have to go home. They don't understand that this is not a thing you can just "give up". They think that if I just sit at home and don't do anything, it will just pass over. (M 17 town)

I'm a 17 year old guy. I am a Hungarian citizen and I have a normal family living in good circumstances. I am gay and therefore my father and my older brother "hate" me, a sentiment they express when they feel the need. In any case, I don't stress my identity and only my family and those friends whom I can trust (and who can be trusted) know. Even so there was (and is) condemnation. (M 17 village)

I will just relate one briefly: I was 19 when it reached the ears of my family where I belong. One relative didn't greet me for years afterward because they didn't want to catch it from me: "you'll infect me in the end!" This has normalised to some extent, but this person will never accept me as I am. (F 28 Bp)

When I came out as gay to my mother and twin sister, my sister announced how disgusting I was and voiced every last thing that came to her mind as well as stating that she would exterminate this biological mutation (she was still studying for a career in biology at that time). This was several months ago, now we are at the stage where my mother (who accepted it and dealt with it normally) has had her read the same misconceptions and facts about gay people which I had given to my mother to read when I came out to her. So now my sister feels that I am her brother if I am not gay – in other words, nothing can be spoken about in her presence, which can bring to her mind that I am gay. (M 18 city)

Some respondents reported that after a while their family situation became "pacified" at least to a certain extent:

My mother accepted it with great difficulty. I was 24 when I told her. She was aghast. She knew virtually nothing about homosexuality. She worried that she'd done something wrong, that she brought me up badly, that I should have gone to a psychologist, and that I must HIV-infected. During my coming-out we spoke for some four hours and I had to reassure her that it is not her fault, nor mine, and that it is not a sickness and so on. After this it was a taboo topic between us for about two years. We talked about everything (we have a good trustful relationship with each other), but never about me being gay or whether I have someone.

Once she announced that she would like to stay over when I was already living with my boyfriend. I was aghast, about what would happen. But there was no trouble at all. She said that she knew full well that I was living with a man and all three of us had a good talk. Since then they are on very good terms. (M 30 Bp)

My parents were confronted with enormous prejudice, but they never excluded me from the family circle, moreover, after a while they made every effort to understand as well as they could, but it took the best part of ten years before they could completely accept me as I am. (M 30)

The taken for granted heterosexuality of the family home was experienced by many respondents as oppressive and alienating. Rejection by family members often reflected fear of social stigmatization affecting the parents and the family as a whole in a heterosexist environment. Family rejection targeting partners was also mentioned by some respondents, which usually meant a painful compromise: while their individual LGBT status seemed to be recognized and accepted by family members, at the same time their partners' existence was symbolically as well as practically denied:

I suffered discrimination to the extent that my parents didn't know, or could not accept, that I am gay. Whenever this topic was broached they simply laughed and said that those are bad people who should be crushed. Therefore I cannot tell them that I am gay. (M 25 town)

When I told my mother she labelled me sick: she said she could no longer look me in the eye, that I destroyed all her dreams, that I must not tell my father as it would kill him. And, if I wanted to enough, that I would be able to stifle that feeling within me and be able to lead a normal life. On the other hand I do lead a normal life. I am at university; I am studying abroad on a grant at the moment. I practice sport and try to help others. It has been almost a year now and since then she (my mother) acts as if nothing had happened. (M 21 city)

My mother is not willing to accept the fact that her son is gay, because it will "destroy her". My grandparents don't even know, because according to them "you must not do such a thing – the worst would be if you were a faggot" (M 20 Bp)

Discrimination in family and friendly circles manifests itself only to the extent that they don't wish to hear about "my private life", they consider my relationship problems nonexistent, yet family members and friends share these kinds of joys and problems with me, on occasion to the extreme. (F 67 Bp)

[I am discriminated by a] parents, in that they will openly speak about the partner of my brother and be glad about that, but will not take account of the known fact that I also have a partner, whom my parents know, and moreover, apart from

the kind of relationship we are in, whom they like. Neither can I speak about it in my parents' presence or in that of other family members. – And, "naturally" I have to take part in family occasions by myself and endure every kind of questioning and pity from family and friends as they see fit in connection with a 29 year old woman. (F 29 Bp)

### II.4.3. *Friends' circle*

42% of respondents experienced discrimination in their friends' circle. The most often assumed reasons for this included homophobia of friends and fear of social stigmatization affecting friends of LGBT people in a heterosexist environment.

I had such friends, who cut all ties after my coming out, because they were afraid that they would also be seen as faggots. (M 37 Bp)

Unfortunately I cannot do that, because I would only have gay people left as friends. Of course, this way very few know the truth about me and on occasion it will come to someone's mind just how disgusting faggots are. This is not aimed against me in the end, because if they would know the truth then they would realise that this is not something to say in my presence, or they would not be on speaking terms with me at all. (M 18 city)

The simple fact that they found out I am lesbian completely changed my relationship with those people who didn't take that well. Even though we would have been on good terms for a long time they regarded me differently. They spoke about me behind my back and considered me sick. (F 22 city)

Ideological motivations could also cause discrimination among friends:

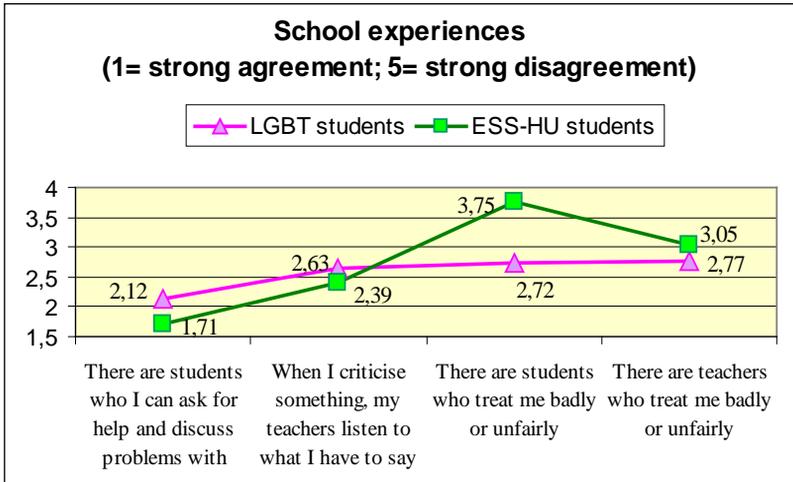
In my friendly circle there is young extreme right nationalist who regularly takes part in Hungarian National Front or some such named association's functions. He and the other members hate gay people and on an internet social forum they send messages to each other as well as on the message board: "prepare to disturb the gay pride march!" It was very painful to read it ... (M 20 city)

### II.4.4. *School*

For examining discrimination experienced by LGBT people in school we were able to compare questions asked in both the LGBT and the ESS-HU samples. According to these findings (See: Table

XIX.) LGBT students had less experience that their teachers listen to their critical remarks (LGBT median 3; ESS-HU: 2), while they suffered more from other students treating them badly or unfairly (LGBT median 3; ESS-HU: 4). In the Hungarian representative sample girls suffered significantly more from the bad or unfair treatment of other students than boys, while in the LGBT sample boys reported significantly more suffering.<sup>29</sup>

Table XIX. School experiences (Mean values)



#### II.4.4. Iskola

Further examination of responses revealed that LGBT respondents suffered mainly by the attitude of fellow students (in elementary and secondary schools more often than in higher educational institutions). Mistreatment by teachers was experienced by about half of the respondents at all levels of education but especially in higher educational institutions, while about a third of respondents encountered distorted representation of LGBT-related issues in school curricula (See: Table XX.).

<sup>29</sup> Similar tendencies were reported by a European study on the social exclusion of LGBT youth (Takács 2007).

Table XX. Discrimination in school

	Elementary school 36%	Secondary school 49%	Higher education 38%
Bullying by fellow students	93,8	93,6	88,6
Mistreatment by teachers	47,6	50,1	56,9
Distorted or lacking representation in curriculum	26,9	29,2	33,2

Intimidating violent behaviour of fellow students included a wide spectrum of negative experiences from name calling and ostracism to physical attacks:

Homophobia is having a golden age both on the part of some teachers as well as that of scores of students: it has become like a trend for someone to hate the "buggerers". As a number of them know about me that I am gay, naturally some also know of whom I was not the most favourite. So now we are at the stage that there is such a classmate with whom I have hardly spoken two words during four years and who will not greet me back when we pass in the street and I greet him. Additionally there are of course the continuous remarks and attempts to humiliate ... (M 18 city)

At secondary school ... there were regular verbal attacks, remarks, humiliations. Physical bullying didn't happen thanks to blind luck. These things happened expressly because of my gayness. I thought about changing schools and even tried to, but I was not able to change schools. (M 26 city)

I had to leave a secondary girls' boarding school because of my sexual orientation as the students ostracised me and publicly abased me. (W 17 village)

At secondary boarding school my room mates completely excluded me and the thing escalated to the point of a minor punch-up when I was forced to leave. I continued my education in a day school in Debrecen. (M 25 village)

During my years at secondary school my male classmates (luckily there were mainly girls in the class and only 5-7 boys) ... ostracised, bullied, and insulted me ... Most atrocities happened in the gym changing room. Thanks to this I regularly skived off physical education in the eleventh and twelfth grades, or I changed well before when the changing rooms were still empty. To this day I hate P.E. – I think most gay/lesbian people experience nastiness during their school years, of which the hurt is emotional rather than physical in the better case. Even so, I would count myself as one of the luckiest ones. – This would, in my opinion, be avoidable if children were not to hear about filthy faggots at home. If sex education at school (from the earliest practical age) would treat the questions of what is that homosexuality and how one could relate to this all. This would also be useful because it would inform young gay people about those who deny themselves and who are ashamed of what they are. This way it would raise adults who could build a more accepting and tolerant society. (M 19 village)

A former classmate turned up drunk and unannounced and tried to rape me so that he could deflect me from that “sin against God”. (F 36 Bp)

We were waiting for the professor to give a lecture seated in benches. One guy was a little late when there was only space left in the row in which I sat as well. When he saw that he turned away in disgust: “I am not sitting in faggot’s row. I could catch something.” with this he left the lecture theatre. (M 21 city)

Bullying was often interpreted by victims as being related to or being the consequence of gender nonconforming behaviour, character and look – or what was perceived to be such by others:

Although I am a man, I was quite “girlish” until well into my adolescence, therefore having “boy-girl” shouted at me, or being ostracised, which led me to adopt a more boyish form of speech and gesticulation. The older I became, the fewer insults came my way. At secondary school and at university I was never the target of such insults. Nevertheless, the hurts of my childhood are quite strong – though not unmanageable –and have created a sensitivity within me concerning my otherness. (M 30 Bp)

At elementary school my classmates ridiculed me because of my feminine mannerisms. I was the subject of bad natured rumours. (M 20 village)

My otherness has unintended signs in my voice, movement, and mannerisms. I have been “held to account” for these in elementary and secondary school and at my workplace as well. I am neither able nor willing to change these. (M 24 city)

This phenomenon can also be related to the strict enforcement of rigidly separated sets of gendered behaviour by peers who seemed to suspect homosexuality when gender role expectations were not “properly” fulfilled. Gender nonconformity or “gender atypicality” has been shown to be associated with increased risk for victimization, harassment, and even suicide of LGBT youth (Remafedi et al., 1991, D’Augelli et al. 2002). Perceived nonconforming gender behaviour leading to assumptions and suspicions of being non-heterosexual leading to anti-gay/lesbian victimisation at school could affect non-heterosexual as well heterosexual youth. Previous research findings also emphasized that bullying on the basis of sexual orientation can affect all children, since heterosexual children are sometimes wrongly presumed to be otherwise and also subject to such abuse (McLean – O’Connor 2003; D’Augelli 2003).

A situation very similar to the strict enforcement of rigidly separated sets of gendered behaviour by adolescent peers can be recog-

nized in reports on sport clubs where 23% of respondents suffered from discrimination.

This year, at a summer training camp several presumably hererosexual men made derisive comments about the appearance of an approximately fifteen year old lesbian-like looking girl. (F 34 Bp)

One of my best friends was threatened by a guy who went to the same gym who said that if he saw my friend there again he would beat his head to a pulp ... only my friend's homosexuality "gave cause for that" (M 20 Bp)

These practices can well illustrate the functioning of the "heterosexual matrix" (Butler 1990): the widespread assumption about the illusory internal coherence of identity, which is manifested in the opposition of asymmetrically divided female and male characteristics in the cultural matrix of gender norms, and in the "heterosexualization of desire". Pupils bullying others on the basis of an "insufficient degree" of masculinity or femininity internalized the causal interrelation between one's sex and one's gender as well as the culturally constructed gender roles and sexual desire or sexual behaviour. This aspect of anti-gay/lesbian bullying depends more on the perpetrators' gender socialization norms than on the actual traits of the victims, thus it can affect anyone irrespective of their "real" sexual orientation or gender identity. And perhaps in this context it also starts to make sense why young boys and men, who cannot or do not want to use the privileges provided for them by the "heteropatriarchal" norm system (Kitzinger – Perkins 1993), will suffer more.

Victims of bullying also include those – students as well as teachers – who did not suffer directly from verbal or physical attacks but had to face manifestations of homophobia at school.

At elementary and secondary school classmates swore at "faggots". (M 20 Bp)

Already at elementary school in the corridor they were laughing at me: "here comes the little faggot", though I don't think that I gave any cause for such labels. At secondary school the situation was similar. (M 20 town)

My pupils made homophobic comments on several occasions, not knowing that I am personally involved in this topic. (F 36 Bp)

While respondents claimed that mostly their peers were responsible for bullying them, about half of those who reported on negative

experiences in school mentioned teachers as being the source, or being part of their problems. Many factors can explain the reluctance of school teachers and administrators to intervene against blatant anti-sexual minority bias: prejudice, stereotyping, ignorance, and sheer discomfort with the topic of homosexuality and transgender certainly play a part as well as the fact that many school personnel are genuinely confused or conflicted about these issues because of their own moral or religious beliefs (Roffmann 2000)

The teacher in charge of the boarding part my secondary school once held a lecture about sexual life. In this lecture he made a special detour into the sexual life of gay people. Even today, with my adult head I condemn the presentation I heard then. It contained namby-pamby and obscene parts as well. (M 26 city)

My Hungarian teacher expressed his opinion about homosexuality, which was none other than that gay people are sick, and that he would not shake hands with a single one of them. (M 18 town)

After obtaining my diploma I enrolled on a course of law for economists. The professor already expressed his prejudices in connection with homosexuality in his first lecture; in my opinion these are not in the course material. Among other things he would banish them [homosexual people] to a separate village, in the absence of which he would ban every article or news in connection with homosexuality, lock homosexual people into their homes: "between four walls it doesn't matter what you do", at least as far as their relationships are concerned. We were studying from a textbook written by the professor, from which we could learn that one of the main causes of homosexuality is that great American powers are spreading it INTENTIONALLY, so that fewer children will be born and thus, if I remember correctly, these powers will extend over Europe as well. Additionally we could also learn that homosexuality is a sickness, which is thank God outstandingly curable, except, as we learnt from the lecture, that homosexuals are not willing to go to the doctor. The outcome of further lectures is unknown to me because I left the course. (F 32 city)

At a healthcare polytechnic psychology lecture the psychology lecturer (who also has a practice) presented homosexuality as an abnormal unnatural thing – illustrated with example: they will become suicidal etc. (M 36 village)

A lecturer at university regularly entertained the students with homophobic jokes and on several occasions expressed his negative opinion about gay people, naturally spouting typical prejudices known to everybody, which have no basis at all (for example: if his son were to see a gay person, then that boy would also become gay, and gay people are paedophiles). ... Besides, this man dressed to distinction, partook in manicures, used foundation ... I would not rule out that he was a latent homosexual, which he had to suppress because of his military function. I was not directly affected by this since it did not occur to the lecturer that there might be gay people present at his lectures. With hindsight, I am sorry that I did not stand up and leave – but I had to get my diploma ... (M 26 Bp)

Previous research indicated that there was a strong need for inclusion and positive representation of LGBT people – as pupils and/or parents – and their families in the school curriculum: this would be an important step to making pupils more accepting of alternative family structures, and seeing their life experience reflected in the school curriculum would also be very affirmative for both LGBT youth and the children of LGBT parents (McLean – O’Connor 2003).

I am convinced that ignorance is the cause of ill-will and prejudice. Study books don’t mention us, yet everything starts from here really. (M 28 Bp)

In the curriculum it was bothering that there was no mention of gay people having been thrown into concentration camps in the treatment of the Holocaust. I think this should definitely be written into every history book. (M 20 Bp)

I think bi-, homo-, and transsexuality should definitely be introduced into the school curriculum and everyone should be informed that the misconceptions are not true. Of course, that will not work as long as teachers try to increase their popularity with humiliating jokes about faggots in class time, but we have to start somewhere ... (M 18 city)

In my opinion a children get to the stage of which gender attracts them really at the age of around ten. That’s when they real start to ponder this question. Until then they wish to conform to what they have seen in their environment. At this time sex education should be held. Not only the usual sex education, but lectures with a tactful outlook on otherness should be held. (Not treated and explained separately, but as a natural whole together with the hetero lifestyle. This would naturally require a qualified child psychologist, consultant, and a detailed curriculum). And not just on one occasion, but continuously. Then perhaps the new generation could be educated to be more tolerant (although this expression is not the most appropriate, because it expresses rather the necessity to accept each other) ... moreover develop a subconscious capacity to accept the other as equal. However, parental endorsement would also be needed: if a child hears discrimination at home then this kind of teaching cannot be successful. (M 20 town)

If sex education at school (from the earliest practical age) would treat the questions of what is that homosexuality and how one could relate to this all. This would also be useful because it would inform young gay people about those who deny themselves and who are ashamed of what they are. This way it would raise adults who could build a more accepting and tolerant society. (M 19 village)

Besides references to silencing and ignoring LGBT issues in the school curriculum, the majority of respondents mentioned examples of presenting LGBT issues in negative contexts such as disease, sin, unnatural way of being:

In informative or library material this has been a perfectly avoided topic. ... in "textbooks" it appears only as sickness-degradation, a basic repugnance continuously stressed, ... continuous mentally oppressive and distressing environment. Under these circumstances it is difficult to develop into an entire self-aware person – a question of strong will power. (M 29 town)

As a student in secondary school I would have needed much more help not to think of gayness as a sin to be suppressed. The fact that this was not or only negatively treated (I took my final exams in 1992 at a church school) greatly contributed to my not being able to handle my gayness, so that I fled into a monastic lifestyle, which is in the end not for me. I think that also now many young people lack this help in secondary school. (M 34 Bp)

At secondary school, in the first half of the ninth grade Sappho, who wrote love verses for girls, appears in the literature curriculum. In connection with this the textbook (Mohácsy Károly: Literature I) notes in brackets that "the [ancient] Greeks considered same-sex love natural this must not be judged according to present day moral tenets." Mohácsy does not state which are these moral tenets nor who adopts them. These days there are also those who consider same-sex love natural, whereas the majority condemns them. Are these today's moral tenets? One of the tasks of education is to form the character of young people, helping their harmonious development. Teachers should lead by example, which also includes tolerance. (F 21 city)

The silencing of LGBT issues in the school curriculum, i.e. the fact that LGBT issues are not included, mentioned or covered in the school curriculum, can be interpreted as a tool at the institutional level for maintaining LGBT invisibility at school and as such an instance of discrimination in itself.

In form teacher's classes we never spoke about such topics, only in ethics classes in the twelfth grade. The old teacher made it clear that she considered homosexuality a shameful, sick, and sinful thing. There were a couple of students in one form who disputed this view, which quite poisoned the situation. Because of this these students became the "rebels" who knew no respect. (The school is one of the largest in the county: more than a thousand students attend. There are certainly gay people among them, perhaps as many as an entire form, but it has not occurred to the majority of teachers and students that some students might be gay, lesbian or bisexual ...) In a physics class the middle aged male teacher read out an example in which there were two boys. The teacher remarked that in reality one of them could have been a girl as they are pressing for the "faggots" here. The majority had a good laugh about this. In general they take this sort of thing as good humour. In other words it was not advisable for anyone to come out for their otherness. (F 21 city)

The University Student Council (in official written reply to the request to register a gay society) does not recognise the society as a university society with the mo-

tivation that gayness is not an activity, while there is, for example, a university catholic society. Is being catholic an activity? (M 27 Bp)

We are in an excluded (and not included) position in social discourse: condemned to silence in many fields. As if only heterosexual love, feeling, relationship, family, and sexuality would exist. I am especially sensitive – as a teacher – to the pedagogical dimension of heteronormativity: the total silence in curricula, school life, education law, textbooks, sex education brochures, and activities on LGBT topics. In this field we still have a very long road to travel. (M 34 Bp)

#### II.4.5. Media

59% of our respondents found that media products expressed prejudice and/or included discriminative elements targeting LGBT people. Topics related to LGBT issues usually share a common “mainstream media fate” with other relatively powerless – for example, ethnic – minority groups, which can be characterised by low visibility and stereotypical representation (Gross 2002).

A distorted image of LGBT people often appears in the media; time and again it is my experience that in our midst it is still possible, moreover in certain media almost commonplace to use abusive slang and speak pejoratively about LGBT people. (M 34)

There are numerous cases of gay people and gay community events presented in a stereotyped way, for example the [Pride] march or the “Melegség és Megismerés”(Gayness and Recognition) programme in which I am personally involved. (F 36 Bp)

Extreme, incorrect portrayal of the community typically polarised: extreme phenomena made to appear typical. (M 28 Bp)

Perhaps if the media were to show things from a slightly different perspective, that would help. After all, what does a lay hetero person see on TV?! Transvestites with pink boas on their necks and similar, which is completely scandalous and morbid for someone who does not move in such circles. Understandable somehow. They should highlight that we, gay and lesbian people are just the same kind of working, normal people like them. (M 21 city)

In this context one respondent referred to the responsibility of the organisers of the annual Pride March. According to him organisers should do some sort of “image management” of the Pride and it would be their task to prevent the occurrence of provoking material for sensational media coverage.

These days there is no longer such a great gulf between straights and gays as there was previously; for many only the [Gay Pride] march is a thorn in the eye, and not only among hetero people. We must not blame the media as we cannot really change that, but we should reckon that from this that will come out, from that something else. The fear of the majority could be assuaged if they were to see that when we gain something they will lose nothing, their life will not turn for the worse because of it – taunting is not the best means, because it strengthens their fears that are joy can only be had at their cost. If we cannot restrain provocation, nor join with each other, then we cannot select common goals, nor can we represent ourselves and individual [self-]gratification and ambitions will determine the future of the entire community and how it is judged. (M 29 Bp)

Media products were often seen as distorting reality by spreading stereotypes, frequently in a sensationalist manner, contributing to the maintenance of heteronormativity and the spread of homophobia by being the mouth piece of homophobic politicians, priests and other “celebrities”. 54% of our respondents encountered manifestations of anti-gay prejudice or discrimination by political organisations and politicians, a large proportion of which was most probably mediated by various media product.

Homophobia reflected in everyday conversations, public discourse, cultural and media representations was also referred to as problematic – though this seem to be part of the “natural way of life” in a heteronormative environment thus in most cases goes unnoticed.

I place the use of degrading language in company like “poof” jokes in a similar vein, or the use of “faggot” or “wanker” to mean “shitface” in the category of discrimination. It is hard to say anything about this, even when I am among those who know that I am gay. (M 37 Bp)

Directly I have not suffered any insults, but there few places where I would not run into – mostly harmless – use of “faggot”. (M 31 Bp)

I have suffered a lot of prejudice. I was myself homophobic and bigoted because I heard such opinions and utterances in my environment. Very many people linked homosexuality to feminine behaviour. A similar supposition is the confusion of paedophilia and gayness, which I have experienced and experience still. As long as I don't tell that I am gay I can obviously not experience direct abuse, but I did experience numerous deferred “attacks”, very coarse invectives right up to “all faggots ought to be shot” from schoolmates, acquaintances, church members ... (M 34 Bp)

Parents do not in general speak about gayness, or they are opposed to it, so that the child will grow up in this. With exchanges of opinion at school homophobia

is strengthened, the spreading of disbeliefs starts ... and quite few remain anti-queer. Among them there are quite a lot of gay people, but since the voice of the majority is aimed directly against them, they disappear into the collective grey-ness and follow their (homophobic) examples, which I think is a huge problem. (M 18 city)

#### II.4.6. Workplace

36% of respondents reported negative experiences in relation to the workplace spanning a wide spectrum of phenomena including not getting promoted, being dismissed – or not even getting the job in the first place. Workplaces are often characterised by a heteronormative climate, where everyone is assumed to be heterosexual. LGBT employees can suffer from the open homophobia of their colleagues, thus a lot of people prefer not to come out at the workplace.

Social acceptance and respect would be a very good thing. I wouldn't like it if I had to change workplace and this would cause a problem. Secondly it would be good if the acceptance was not in the form that they are not throwing stones at you, but for example that I would be able to have photo of my lover at my workplace. And, that the computer which a colleague and I both use would not only have her wedding photos as screensaver, but that I could put mine on there as well. I would like it if that would count as just as normal! I feel the same things as the straights, only in a different direction. I would be very happy if people could finally accept this. (F 25 Bp)

At my workplace ... even if I don't speak about private life they do broach it with time. People who call themselves tolerant "play gay" with their mates, which they always do for the benefit of different or new colleagues in my presence. This provides discriminative information about me to others who I don't know. The "faggot" joke told a few days ago in my presence is also typical. ... (M 34 city)

With regard to professional progress a gay person can never advance (not even when not publicly out) on the basis of his work. I have experienced this in the first place from taking work in educational establishments, but hidden (unspoken) is that works like that almost everywhere. The most correct attitude is that nothing should turn out about the worker's private life. (M 35 city)

I am convinced that it happened because of my gayness, but they would not admit that they kicked me out because of that. I was very ashamed because of it, but I was glad that they didn't spell it out, because that would have been even worse if it would have turned out for family and acquaintances as well. ... She and I both had children and we both lived with families, and at that time one still had to hide very much. ... Since then I have been a freelancer without workplace the past nineteen years. (F 57 town)

At my workplace: ostracism, discrimination, humiliation. The sad thing is that we were dealing with socially disadvantaged people and 90% of the staff could be said to be zero tolerant. They pestered and insulted me to the point where I thought it better to leave my job after it turned out that I am lesbian. (F 37 town)

My colleagues are in general ignorant about LGBT topics, they believe in misconceptions, often attach pejorative labels to gay people when such a topic comes up. – They don't know I am one as well. (M 27 Bp)

The biggest problem, also mine, is income security. If I come out for my gayness, it is possible that I will no longer get orders from certain places, or perhaps fewer, or for less money, because my being lesbian is not desired and drags down the firm's good name. This is not paranoia because we are not talking of the possible prejudice of the client, but about public opinion which we van treat as a fact. It is not likely that the firm will risk earnings because of me. (F 38 Bp)

#### *II.4.7. Healthcare system*

28% of the respondents experienced discrimination or prejudice in the Hungarian healthcare system, including openly discriminative cases related to blood giving and HIV testing.

A year ago I succeeded in giving blood after having convinced the nurse in a long dispute that I live in a stable relationship (with my then girlfriend), and that I am not more dangerous from AIDS or other risks than any hetero. (F 25 Bp)

As far as healthcare is concerned: I have excellent blood (blood group O, rhesus positive) and I cope well with them taking blood from me – but either I cannot give blood, or I have to lie about myself. (M 37 Bp)

As a blood donor one has to fill out a form, which contains the question whether there was any homosexual contact in the last year among questions about the state of health. If anyone answers that question affirmatively, then they are refused as blood donor. They do not ask: "was there a risky sexual contact?" Imagine what it means to fill out such a form at a large workplace! Moreover, they copy the identifying form (containing name, address, blood group details, etc.) on the back of the anonymous questionnaire – presumably to save paper. (M 38 Bp)

I consider myself a responsible citizen, who would, if he could give BLOOD regularly, but that is not possible. Because of my homosexuality they have excluded me as blood donor on every occasion. I ask you: in the case of a 25 year old Hungarian who regularly (every half year) takes tests (HIV, hepatitis, syphilis, etc.), is such discrimination just? Healthcare workers have said on every occasion that I cannot give blood, because the risk of HIV infection is high. Now I ask again: Is the blood TESTED for certain quite infectious diseases before it is given to patients, or does everyone trust heterosexuals making this unnecessary? (M 24 Bp)

Before an operation the surgeon had me take an HIV test, because he saw that I was gay. (M 24 Bp)

A few years ago, after an adventure I had to go to the skin and STD clinic, where they wanted to know at all costs whether I had been with a gal or a guy. After that they tested for HIV as well, which would not be compulsory according to a standpoint of TASZ (Hungarian Civil Liberties Union). (M 27 Bp)

Discrimination in the health care system was often connected to the homophobic prejudice and ignorance of physicians (and medical bodies) and nurses.

At the urology clinic the doctor on several occasions rather held a small lecture about how terrible, that such a young girl as I would think about herself that she is lesbian. Someone must have gone wrong somewhere and I should ask for medical help. Meanwhile the doctor did not solve the problem for which I did indeed ask medical help. (F 25 Bp)

After being unwell I was admitted to the emergency ward for one day and one night. In the closing report the treating doctor declared me “strongly feminine” – on the other hand he had had no hospital tests done on me... Hence it only turned out from tests at a clinic where I went after the hospital what the real problem was, which should have been operated on immediately. (M 51 Bp)

In Hungarian healthcare both at the levels of general practice and specialist care great ignorance, no preparation, and conservative prejudice is manifest in the treatment of sexually transmitted diseases! At the specialist level one frequently hears of degrading, scolding behaviour during the examination or treatment of male gay patients even in the capital! (M 40 Bp)

I have most often found discrimination of gay men at the general practice, where doctors in their conferences about patients openly condemn these people and label them as sick. I have also seen examples of indirect discrimination by these doctors. (M 27 town)

An acquaintance, who works at OMSZ (National Ambulance Service), encouraged a suicidal transgender girl to continue her attempt to end her life, and was not prepared to call her by another name than that on her identity card. He does not tire himself too much either when attending to Roma people in critical condition ... (M 26 city)

The Hungarian Doctors' Chamber produces what was known in Nazi Germany from 1936 under the name F14F: which was the programme to exterminate mentally ill, schizophrenic, and homosexual people. They do not distance themselves on their website from homophobic and Nazi utterances of their own members, moreover, their president explains with expressed understanding what is not explainable: homosexuality is a psychiatric illness which must be cured – and this is what the president was explaining instead of rejecting it out of hand. (M 31 Bp)

### II.4.8 Religious community

Experience of discrimination and prejudice in the religious community, which was reported on by 28% of our respondents, depended on the level of religiousness: mostly respondents who considered themselves as non-religious reported on these incidents (they were followed by the religious respondents and the neutral ones).<sup>30</sup> In this context the higher sensitivity of non-religious respondents might be connected to disillusionment felt by those who left their church as a result of suffering from institutionalised homophobic discrimination and prejudice.

They excluded me from my small religious community because of my gayness. (M 37 Bp)

I cannot attend my religious community (orthodox Jewish) as they would interfere into my private life. I would have to keep that a secret there. That is why I don't go. (M 27 Bp)

The "Christians" attitude to this matter, I believe, requires no explanation. (M 24 Bp)

Hungarian Christian churches – mainly the Hungarian Catholic church – are in general not inclined to meaningful dialogue, communication, or making a gesture toward a more modern standpoint reviewing homosexuality – only announcements and one-sided warnings. For example, they have never taken their place in civic society's conciliatory forums. On HIV-AIDS, questions about the use of contraceptives and condoms their standpoint is very hidebound, while they never deploy charity activity in this field. Their representatives make finely phrased, but forbidding, criticising, and hostile statements in the media against gayness and against free forms of lifestyle. They also do this from the pulpit, sometimes referring to real cases. Likewise in TV programmes ... (M 40 Bp)

In spite of the apparent inherent incompatibility of religion and homosexuality at least one response illustrated that it is possible to be accepted in a religious environment, too.

We have to realise that at least half my acquaintances are of conservative background; Christian raised, and church members. They also accepted my coming out well. I did not get on bad terms with anybody. There were some who had to swallow, and turn the thing over for a week or two, but after that there was no problem. (M 30 Bp)

<sup>30</sup> See: Table XI. Religiousness.

### II.4.9. Problems of the legal system and life as a couple

Almost half of the respondents (47%) referred to their experiences of discrimination in the Hungarian legal system, which included the lack of same-sex marriage and joint adoption in the first place, and the difficulties of leading a single life, lack of artificial insemination, lack of hate crime and hate speech legislation.

Do gays have such rights (marriage, inheritance, adoption), as straights have? That's discrimination, isn't it? (M 18 city)

Discrimination? Are you joking? I am a second class citizen (F 33 Bp)

These days – when they are talking a lot about gay marriage and adoption – I am always amazed that the aspect that *I* am forced lead my entire life without child. ... And with couples it is not emphasised how bad it is for so many to have to live alone! (W 55 Bp)

Naturally I consider my self legally discriminated against (as well as those who belong to such a group). I would, for example, like to have a child, but I can see that this would run into great difficulties in the Hungarian legal system. If I find a partner I would like to get married in the long term ... (W 34 Bp)

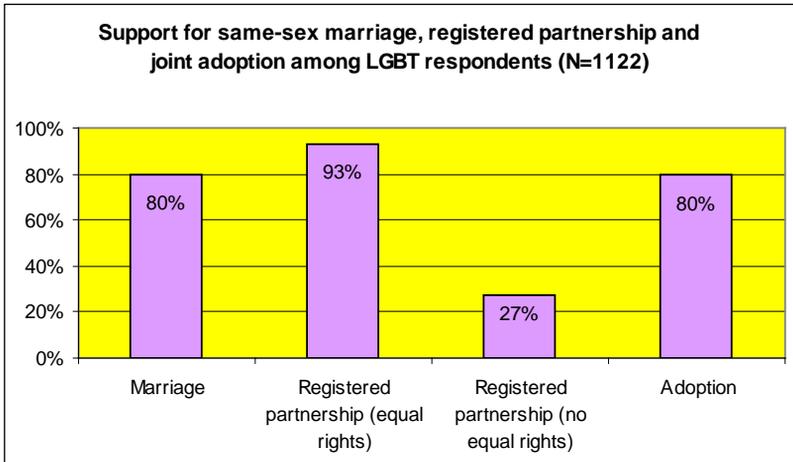
No marriage, nor adoption, nor artificial insemination; there is no efficient action against hate speech and hate crime. (M 28 Bp)

It was also emphasised that in the case of 'second parent adoption', 'step parent adoption', or 'co-parent adoption' when the child is already usually the biological child of one partner, and the child is going to grow up in the household with the same-sex family where they are – so the only question is whether it is better for the child to have two legal parents or one. In this context it is important to point out that children living in different family arrangements must not be discriminated on grounds of a state supported normative hierarchy of less or more desirable family arrangements, as children usually have little control over these developments – they just suffer the disadvantageous consequences.

There is remarkably little if any mention of the argument in favour of adoption that very many lesbian women have had naturally born children (as well as numerous gay men), even in Hungary too, and while this demands a lot of lying, it does prove the fact that there is no harm in homosexuals raising children. ... I know, that they are avoiding this argument in "the interest of the children", because nobody wants to stand out in public with their own child or children ... (F 67 Bp)

Support for same-sex marriage, registered partnership and joint adoption among LGBT respondents is shown in Table XXI. In the LGBT sample female respondents supported the opening up of the institution of marriage or the introduction of the institution of same-sex marriage more than the male respondents. Registered partnership providing equal rights with marriage was supported the most by respondents aged 25-40, as well as those living together with a same-sex partner and those living with parents. Joint adoption by same-sex partners was also supported more by women, as well as those with higher educational degree and people living in Budapest. According to the household types joint adoption was favoured most by those who already live together with a same-sex partner and people living alone.

**TABLE XXI. Support for same-sex marriage, registered partnership and joint adoption among LGBT respondents**



We can provide two examples for prejudice and discrimination by public institutions, which was experienced by 10% of our respondents, deriving from the legal unsettledness of same-sex partnership arrangements, and the lack of awareness that these arrangements can and do exist in everyday life.

My partner and I wanted to register our civil partnership, but we just ran into brick walls. As we had been living in the district for some four years, we thought that would try to exercise the modest right that was ours. I therefore went into

district's mayoral office to enquire and ask information about how such a thing takes place. When I said that I was homosexual, the official dealing with this matter became very unfriendly, and made it clear in unspoken words that we had little chance to obtain our official certificate that we are indeed living as life partners. ... The official also said that we would have to motivate why we want the certificate which I answered by saying that we wished to establish a common household. ... (M 35 Bp)

I was living in a life partnership with a lady when I rang [a call centre] for account information, where a man announced that he could imagine a gentleman as Ms. XY's partner. ... [and] was in fact not inclined to give information, but if I would have said at the beginning that I was Ms. XY, then there would not have been a problem. So it's not worth to be straight. ... Who is curious about their homophobic opinions?! (F 25 Bp)

Most accounts on negative experiences in restaurants and shops, which were mentioned by 27% of our respondents, were also connected to the increased visibility of same-sex couples: when they appear and behave not as friends but as a couple.

My girlfriend stroked my hand in a restaurant so the waiter idly called us dykes. (F 40 Bp)

Someone I know held his birthday party in a non-gay restaurant. When the waiters realised that significant part of the company was gay (because those who were with their partner were not afraid to show that by touching and kissing – though nothing too extreme) they asked us to control ourselves, because this place was open to the public. We took this as an indignation and left. Despite several requests were not given the complaint book. (M 27 village)

#### *II.4.10. Use of public space*

Many LGBT respondents felt restricted in their use of public spaces, such as walking on the streets, without being harassed. Safety is a basic concern for everyone but it seems that it cannot be taken for granted so readily by LGBT people who are often reminded to be aware of potential attacks, abuse and other acts of hostility.

We were made out as filthy queers a few times in the street, though we were not behaving nor dressed outrageously, but since my sight is impaired my partner held me by the elbow. Now I am forced to carry a white stick as a sign that my eyesight is damaged. (M 34 Bp)

My partner was interfered with on the metro because he was supposed to look gay. (M 34 Bp)

I was on my way home on a bus route, when a man sat down next to me, while his mates gathered round. From here on they were abusing me loudly, right until I got off the bus. Of course, that wasn't so easy either, they only allowed me out of the inner seat with great difficulty, then they shouted "run, faggot, run". (M 21 city)

While taking leave of my friend (there was no physical contact between us) at the night bus stop they heckled us: "The faggots are here already too!" (M 28 Bp)

My appearance is provoking for some people, for example, in the street people are apprehensive or afraid of me, I feel. In general these situations could be solved, so abuse, violence, or attacks have not happened, but I have heard and know about cases in which that unfortunately did happen. (Transvestite M 29 Bp)

People are showing no tolerance at all to each other! Not in the street, nor indoors. My girlfriend and I were strolling and she took my hand. A not at all kind person was coming the other way and started to shout: "Tut tut! are you lesbians? You should be shamed of yourselves!" (F 20 Bp)

It has happened that they beat up boys just because they are gay near the one and only gay bar in Debrecen. It is dangerous for us to be in the street when there is a party. ... (M 20 city)

Use of public space includes participation in a legal public demonstration such as the Gay Pride March on July 7, 2007, being one of the main political and awareness-raising events of the annual LGBT Festival in Budapest.<sup>31</sup> 2007 was the first year in the 12 year history of LGBT festivals in Budapest when demonstrators became the target of openly violent attacks. These terrible experiences were most probably reflected also in the 50% figure of personal accounts of discrimination referring to participation in a public demonstration.<sup>32</sup>

I was at this year's (2007) pride: they wanted to kill me. (M 29 Bp)

I was there, too: they were throwing things and insulting me. (F 25 Bp)

The events of this year's (2007) Pride March and those of the evening afterwards ... shame of Hungarian society! (F 57 Bp)

I was a witness of the atrocities committed on gay people by extreme nationalists, and the target of a thrown egg at the gay march of 2007. (F 34 Bp)

<sup>31</sup> The main slogans of the demonstration each year includes an actual political message, such as "Equal opportunities for marriage"(2007), "Living together on equal terms" (2006), "It is more free outside"(2005).

<sup>32</sup> See: Table XVIII.

Together with my partner and a friend we left the gay festival at Buddha Beach on July 7<sup>th</sup> in the evening between 9 and quarter to ten. When we came out we could see that there was a group of bald-headed, Greater Hungary T-shirted, masked, or hooded men in the Nehru park. When one of them noticed that we were coming out, he started to shout, and the others joined him: “filthy rotten faggots”, “rubbish Jew whores”, “disgusting traitors”, “you should be shot dead as dogs, disgusting worms”, all directed at us. I asked my partner and his friend not to react to anything, as if nothing had happened, we would go on with wooden faces. That’s what we did. Just before we would have reached the tram track and street lighting, we were attacked from behind by eight bald men. First they struck down my partner, then they were kicking him and his friend also got a right hook. When I saw that my partner was lying on the ground I screamed at them “Let him be, don’t hurt him, we haven’t hurt you!” and I leaped at the attackers to try and rescue my partner. It surprised them a little at first, after which they started to kick and hit me as well, after which they tried to break a champagne bottle over my head – however, they didn’t succeed – then they ran off. I escaped with a slight concussion, my partner’s lip was split and he had cuts, bruises and abrasions on his badly swollen face. We tried to call the police, both on 107 and on 112, but they only answered after several rings. We asked them to come out, to which they asked if there was immediate danger to life, we replied that there wasn’t, at which we were told that they could not occupy themselves with the case, that they would send a patrol, but that we didn’t have to wait for that. We felt very abased indeed, we could hardly go home. (M 26 Bp)

It is outrageous that they are beating up people today in Hungary because they are homosexual. I hate it that they are constantly coming with Auschwitz, but perhaps they are right: after seventy years it will become trendy again to beat up Jews and gays on the streets of Budapest. (M 24 Bp)

The violent attacks during and after the 2007 Budapest Pride (followed by the also very violently attacked 2008 Budapest Pride march) proved that a heteronormative social, cultural norm system, rejecting the existence of LGBT and not only LGBT people, can lead to very violent and physically dangerous manifestations. These attacks reflected the functioning of *systemic violence* (Young 1990): the attackers were not led by individual considerations, their acts were impulsive manifestations of hate, simply for the purpose of degrading and humiliating the victims – leaving behind the knowledge shared by all participants that they are liable to violation, solely on account of their assumed or real LGBT identity.

Personally I only once felt really terrible because I am gay: the 2007 Gay [Pride] March. I was there for the first time in my life, because I felt that I had to come out, I had to show who I am. I was wearing every-day clothes, or maybe even more mundane than my normal wear. But I escaped from the march in the vi-

cinity of Ferenc körút because I couldn't bear the hatred seeking a target as was gushing from the counter-demonstrators. It was appalling to see people, who for the most part were very angry at the whole world because their circumstances had deteriorated, because they cannot find themselves, now they stated to hate a group just so they can spew their hatred and bitterness. (M 30 Bp)

At the Budapest Gay Pride of July 7 2007 and during the following night they committed assault and battery, gay bashings happened! Even though my partner and I were not victims, several people I know were. Thousands of us (and our hetero family members) were terrorised psychologically country-wide by this new phenomenon in Hungary which is gaining quickly in organisation, the number of perpetrators and in aggression! (M 40 Bp)

Because of the events of this year's (2007) march ... the feeling of being secure on the street was reduced by a great deal. We will think twice before holding hands in public. (F 24 Bp)

At the same time this event also demonstrated that LGBT people in Hungary are victims of structural oppression: this was an intersection of heteronormative cultural imperialism and systemic violence. In the public space of the demonstration the individual experiences reflecting lack of recognition by hetero-patriarchal society and the defencelessness of LGBT people being attacked because of their social minority group membership were connected as elements of the same oppressive system.

### III. SUMMARY WITH RECOMMENDATIONS

Our research findings showed that LGBT respondents often suffered from various manifestations of social exclusion in the most important scenes of socialisation. More than 75% of our respondents identified themselves as members of socially discriminated minority group. This very high proportion was not at all an unexpected result taken into consideration the goal of our study and the targeted community sample we used. What can be surprising is the ESS 2006 research findings showing that not only in Hungary but also in the sample of 24 European countries the proportion of socially discriminated minority group membership was only 5-7%. These results can indicate that the majority of the Hungarian population – similarly to the populations in the 24 countries taking part in the European Social Survey in 2006 – does not sense social discrimination, or if

they had this kind of personal experience, they do not connect it to any social minority group membership. The fact that the relationship between social discrimination and social minority group membership was sensed in a much stronger way among LGBT respondents – especially those with higher educational background, aged 25-40, and living in the capital – supports the assumption that the different results between the samples can be explained not so much with the lack of discrimination but rather with the lack of skills to recognize discrimination.

Concerning multiple discrimination in the LGBT sample almost one quarter of the respondents (23%) identified themselves as members of more than one socially discriminated minority groups. In comparison to the representative Hungarian sample results, LGBT respondents also seemed to be more responsive to sense gender and religion based discrimination.

Examination of personal experiences of discrimination showed that the LGBT population cannot be considered homogenous: for example, among the main agents and institutions of socialization lesbian women encountered more discrimination in their own family and in the Hungarian legal system than gay men, while gay men suffered more from discrimination in elementary and secondary schools. Respondents aged 40 or older more often experienced discriminatory practices at their workplace than younger ones. People with higher educational background and those living in Budapest reported on more discriminatory experiences in the legal system, in the media, in a political organisation or in a public demonstration than people with lower education and those living in the countryside. Respondents living in Budapest encountered more discrimination in health care institution, religious communities, civil organisations (NGOs), and less discrimination on behalf of their elementary school teachers than those living in the countryside.

Personal accounts of discrimination provided by our LGBT respondents indicated that in the main scenes of social recognition – for example, in schools, workplaces, friends' circles, religious communities and in the media – heterosexuality seemed to be a precondition for acceptance and appreciation. However, lack of this did not get sanctioned in an unbearable way, especially not in that case if one applied "camouflage strategies" and tried to hide the LGBT-specific

aspects of their lives. The taken for granted heterosexuality of the family home was also experienced by many respondents as oppressive and alienating. Isolation, social invisibility and defencelessness of LGBT people were reflected in the pervasive silence concerning LGBT experiences and lifestyles in school, family, and workplace, including the lack of representations in the school curricula, being ridiculed by classmates and teachers; being forced out of the family home, keeping secrets at the workplace, being humiliated in a restaurant, distorted media representations and also institutionalized discriminatory practices of the Hungarian legal system.

By applying Young's structural concept of oppression (1990) we can state that verbal and physical attacks against LGBT people, their intimidation and the fact that in many places they fail to acknowledge it as a problem, can be interpreted as symptoms of systemic anti-LGBT violence; while invisibility and/or distorted representations of LGBT issues in social and political discourses, at school and in the media as well as the clear discrimination of the Hungarian legal system (concerning marriage and adoption) can be seen as functions of heteronormative cultural imperialism. Therefore LGBT people in Hungary can be seen as victims of structural oppression manifested in everyday social practices. In order to eliminate the structural oppression of LGBT people further legal, social and political changes would be necessary besides the practical application of the already extant equal treatment legislation.

In general legal emancipation of LGBT people can be defined as a process characterised by criminal law reform – i.e. elimination of discriminative aspects of penal codes – as a starting point, leading to anti-discrimination protection and promotion of equality. Anti-discrimination protection can be analysed at an individual level, when the focus is on the protection of individuals, and at a relational level, when the focus of protection is the individuals' relationships with other partners such as partners or children. Anti-discrimination protection is a very important phase of legal emancipation but its essential element is prohibition of already existing and often widespread social practices pushing LGBT people into disadvantageous situations. Therefore it can be seen as a correcting device of older norms and practices. Contrary to criminal law reform and anti-discrimination protection, promotion of equality with its pronounced

orientation on the future, represents not only a different phase of the legal emancipation process but also a different paradigm: it is not just against maintaining social inequalities developed in the past and suffered from in the present, but very much for setting new norms of social coexistence. However, applying the promotion of the equality principle goes beyond rights protection: it is rather a political than a legal issue. It is hard to incorporate positive state action into law because it involves political decisions about the distribution of state or government resources that always tend to be limited.

Achieving a certain level of social visibility for social groups suffering from social disadvantages seems to be a precondition for claiming rights. However, visibility can make individuals vulnerable and therefore not everyone can “afford” to come out. On the other hand, a relatively high level of social visibility does not necessarily correlate with positive developments in legal emancipation. It is very hard – if not impossible – to articulate the interests or defend the rights of socially invisible actors. Discrimination against LGBT people can remain hidden in a lot of instances. This can be explained in part with the preference of victims to avoid publicity at the individual level: in this context fear of humiliation is an important factor. The hidden nature of discrimination against LGBT people can also be explained in part with the lack of appropriate responsiveness and incentives on the institutional level.<sup>33</sup> Existing but ineffectively functioning – i.e. socially invisible for those who would have need of these – institutions can contribute to the fact that certain forms of discrimination remain hidden.

One of the main tools of discrimination prevention is awareness-raising: members of society have to recognize discrimination against LGBT people as a problem both at an intergroup and at an interpersonal level. The law can also be helpful in this respect: the fact that anti-discrimination legislation exists can have awareness-raising effects in itself as it conveys the message that according to the state dis-

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<sup>33</sup> Lack of incentives to turn to a specialised official body responsible for equal treatment issues can also decrease the determination of people to complain about discrimination. In Hungary victims of discrimination cannot be compensated financially from any fines to be paid to the equal treatment authority by the perpetrator of the discrimination. Victims have to start a court case to seek personal compensation, a procedure – often costly in time and money – that complicates the victims’ life and is therefore rare.

crimination is a wrong social practice with punishable consequences. The main forms of awareness-raising include information exchange and communication, education and training, as well as providing people with a personal experience, and participation and involvement opportunities. Awareness-raising in the form of education and training can be realised through developing specific educational programs (lectures, courses etc.) and educational materials (text books, chapters in school books, training manuals etc.) – within the schooling system by targeting students as well as teachers, and outside the schooling system by targeting the general public or its certain segments –, and also through conducting social scientific research and disseminating research findings. Participation and involvement opportunities include, for example, consultations on official reports, documents and decisions – provided that there is intention to involve people in these activities on the “official side”.

On the basis of our research findings we have formulated the following recommendations<sup>34</sup> for Hungarian political decision makers in order to promote awareness-raising and further legal, social, and political changes:

- 1. Recommendation to eliminate the open legal discrimination related to marriage, registered partnership and joint adoption**
- 2. Recommendation to introduce Tolerance Programmes and Tolerance Trainings at secondary school level and at medical schools**
- 3. Recommendation to include LGBT employees into the Equal Opportunities Strategies of workplaces**
- 4. Recommendation to include the LGBT community into the main target groups of the National Equal Opportunities Network**

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<sup>34</sup> Details of the recommendations are available in the Hungarian version of our study.

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